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THE NEW

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The Week-end Review

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

THE French Note proposing that all the leading European Powers should pledge themselves to "neutrality" and non-intervention in the Spanish Civil War has had a favourable reception in England, Belgium and U.S.S.R. Italy delays her answer. Mussolini, on holiday, has in fact repeated his performance of last year when he deliberately kept Mr. Eden kicking his heels in Paris while he waited for an answer. Germany makes "neutrality" dependent on an undertaking from Russia, which Russia has now expressed herself willing to give. "Neutrality" means apparently that no arms, munitions or aeroplanes may be supplied to either side. Oil is not mentioned. Meanwhile, through the censored telegrams, news leaks through which suggests that from one quarter or another military supplies on a considerable scale are reaching General Franco by sea through Moroccan ports. The investigations of the French authorities have established the facts that the planes which flew from Sardinia to reinforce General Franco, two of which fell on Algerian soil, were regular Italian army planes, and that their crews were in part drawn from the Italian air force. This "neutrality" will evidently be one-sided. It should also be noted that a legion of aristocratic refugees was permitted to assemble on Portuguese territory and to cross the frontier to attack the Republic.

The Surprise that Failed

The military position in Spain grows, in spite of the censorship, a little clearer, with the balance of success slightly in the Republic's favour. The rebels had the advantage of a surprise attack following long and careful preparation, with a preponderance of trained forces and especially of artillery. They ought, therefore, to have struck some decisive blows in the first days, which they failed to do. They had not reckoned on the determination of the seamen, who saved the Fleet for the Republic, nor on the hostility of the Basques, who, though good Catholics, are Republicans. There are also dissensions in their ranks between the Carlists and Legitimists, for which reason they have rejected the services of a son-in-law of King Alfonso, who had come as a volunteer. These reasons may explain the failure of their offensives in the North. General Mola's march on Madrid, after some initial successes, seems now to have been definitely pushed back by the Red Militia. The northern coast is also now firmly held by the Government, after heavy fighting round Bilbao and San Sebastian. Only Oviedo, the chief town of Asturias, is still held by the rebel army, though it is said to be surrounded.

The Drama of the Straits

Saragossa, a great garrison town with a military academy, a tank corps and arsenals, is still defending itself against a workers' army drawn from Barcelona, which has

the help of some army planes. One might have expected a formidable offensive from such a military centre, but it did not occur. The whole of Catalonia is solidly under the control of the Left. So also are the eastern maritime provinces, under a regional government with its centre in Valencia. It has been able to spare considerable forces from its militia for the defence of Madrid, and keeps the capital supplied with food. It is not clear whether the vigorous Republican centre of Malaga is isolated, or in touch with the eastern coastal region. The rebels hold the south-west including Cadiz, Seville and Algeciras, but in the early days at least they may have been hampered by a general strike in the towns and by guerilla bands of peasants in the country. A column is said to be marching northward on Madrid, but nothing definite is known about its strength. The fortune of war in the south may swing to General Franco's side since his success in transporting his Moors across the Straits in a mist, escorted by Italian planes.

The Greek "Coup d'état"

Constitutional monarchy has had a very short run in the restored kingdom of Greece. On Wednesday, with the King's support, the ultra-conservative Premier, General Metaxas, carried out what looks like a *coup d'état*. He proclaimed martial law and dissolved the Chamber. His excuses are that the workers had called a one-day general strike, that he suspected a Communist plot to start a revolution, and that the Chamber had proved unworkable. The partial failure of the strike suggests that there was no need for precautions of such severity. Communist tactics in Greece, as elsewhere, are under the new rules of moderation. The Chamber did present a difficult problem, since the Communist group held the balance between the liberal republicans, who had rallied to the monarchy, and the royalists. But in such a situation a militarist and conservative premier was the last man whom a wise king would have chosen to effect conciliation. This move looks like a prelude to the introduction of royalist Fascism on the Jugoslav model.

The Sudan

Two weeks ago the delegates now negotiating a new Anglo-Egyptian treaty in Alexandria reached agreement regarding the disposal of military forces in the central cities. This week it was learned that a settlement had also been concluded on the problem of the Sudan. Negotiations are proceeding on the subject of the Capitulations and there seems to be no reason why Anglo-Egyptian relations should not now be placed on a far more permanent and satisfactory footing. Since the end of the war the Sudan has always provided the main stumbling block, preventing an agreement. In 1899 an Anglo-Egyptian Condominium was established to administer the country, but, partly owing to the violent anti-Egyptian feelings of the Sudanese themselves, Britain was always the dominant partner. After the disturbances in 1924 the last vestiges of Egyptian participation were removed and in 1930 the Labour Government's effort for a settlement was nullified at the last minute by the Egyptian Government's demands for control in the Sudan. The terms of the present settlement are not yet known, but they are understood to include facilities for Egyptian immigration, the reintroduction of Egyptian army units, and the appointment of Egyptian officials to take part in the Sudan Government service. In 1930 Egyptian nationalists would have regarded such terms as insufficient. British Tories would have denounced them as a surrender. To-day, new circumstances, chief among which must be counted the proximity of the new Roman Empire, have happily induced a more reasonable spirit.

American Unionism

The American Federation of Labour, under the highly conservative leadership of Mr. William Green, has taken a step of incalculable importance in suspending ten of the trade unions which have joined John Lewis in his drive towards industrial unionism. The executive insisted on regarding all twelve of these unions, which have joined the Committee of Industrial Organisation, as rebels guilty of "dual-unionism and insurrection," and proceeded to try their officials in their absence, for Mr. Lewis and his colleagues rejected their jurisdiction. The wiser course, advocated by Mr. Ohl, of Wisconsin, might have been to refer the whole dispute to next year's Convention: this at least would have avoided an irreparable schism. Nothing will now stop Mr. Lewis from doing what ought to have been done many years ago—organising the mass production trades on an industrial basis. Dominated by officials of the small craft unions, the A.F. of L. had systematically obstructed the organisation of the unskilled and semi-skilled, with the result that, save in a few trades blessed with progressive unions, the impetus that the New Deal should have given to unionism and collective bargaining was in great measure lost, and the employers were allowed to drive their men into company unions. Mr. Lewis has, however, powerful unions behind him, and might have carried the convention this autumn, if he had not been excluded from its debates.

Labour Governs New Zealand

Mr. Nash, the Labour Finance Minister of New Zealand, introduced his budget this week. It was known in advance that he would need to provide for a considerable increase in expenditure, and that, despite the buoyancy of the revenue as a result of improving conditions, fresh taxes would have to be imposed in order to finance the Labour Government's schemes. Actually, the estimated increase amounts to £5,000,000, the two largest items being £1,700,000 for higher old age pensions and for a new system of invalidity pensions, and rather over £1,000,000 for public works. The Labour Government proposes, in fact, to spend much more than this latter sum on public works, its full programme being estimated to cost £10,500,000, of which £4,500,000 is to come from revenue and the rest from internal borrowing, but without a public loan. This programme, however, is to be spread over several years. The extra taxation is to take the form of a higher income tax—still leaving it below the present British level—and a graduated land tax. The system of guaranteed prices for agricultural produce is being maintained, on a basis of average prices over the past eight or ten years. Altogether, New Zealand appears to be doing well. Exports for the half year are considerably greater than last year's in both quantity and value. Unemployment is less. The exchanges are healthy, and there has been only a small rise in the cost of living despite the guaranteed price policy.

The Trade Unions' Next Step

The British Trade Union movement is at present hovering between different policies. A few weeks ago, the Miners decided to support the Communists' application to join the Labour Party: this week the Building Trade Workers' Union has rejected it. The preliminary agenda for the Trades Union Congress, which will meet as usual early in September, reveals a similar conflict. There are a number of resolutions asking for the opening of negotiations for unity with the Trade Unions in the U.S.S.R.—a policy opposed in the past by Sir Walter Citrine and the General Council, but supported a few weeks ago by the International Federation of Trade Unions, of which Sir Walter Citrine is President. The Distributive Workers have on the agenda a long resolution calling for a united T.U.C. and Labour Party campaign against war, on the lines of a strengthening of the collective peace system through the whole of Europe, and not merely in the west. This resolution also calls for the nationalisation of the arms traffic, and for united working-class action to bring pressure on the Government to adopt a constructive peace policy.

The Popular Front

Meanwhile the possibility of a British Popular Front was discussed at the Liberal Summer School. Sir Archibald Sinclair vigorously denounced the "class jingoism" of the Socialists and claimed that the Liberal objective must be to establish "a non-Socialist alternative to the present Government." Mr. A. J. Cummings, on the other hand, made a powerful plea for an agreed limited programme calculated to appeal to those voters who have deserted the National Government without definitely allying themselves with the Labour Party. The discussions might have proved more fruitful had some attempt been made to discover more precisely the measures on which agreement is possible. The Russian Ambassador gave an outline of the policy of the Soviet Union, and advocated a united front among the peaceful nations against the forces of aggression. Will such a policy receive real support from men like Mr. Lloyd George and Lord Lothian, who have become the self-appointed apologists of Nazi Foreign policy in this country? In Russia the successful prosecution of a policy based on "class jingoism" has meant the replacement of the Imperialism of the Tsar by the "peace" offensive of the Soviets. In France and Spain "class jingoism" provided the main driving force behind the formation of Popular Front Governments. If the British Popular Front is to be something more than an anaemic counterpart of the Continental varieties, Liberals must support measures bolder than those in their present programme.

"Pour Encourager les Autres"

There will be general agreement that Mr. Baldwin was right to dismiss Sir Christopher Bullock for "lack of that instinct and perception from which is derived the sure guide by which the conduct of a Civil Servant should be regulated." But Sir Christopher himself may well feel that he has been singularly unlucky. It is no new thing for high officials in the Ministries for Defence to obtain, when they retire, lucrative posts in firms which do business with these Ministries; and it would be surprising if the negotiations with regard to such posts were not usually carried through before the date of retirement. The remarkable feature in this case is that the head of the firm concerned should have reported the matter. Even if Sir Eric Geddes had approved of Sir Christopher as his successor, he would no doubt have felt it his duty to inform the Government. The heads of other firms, we have reason to believe, are often less scrupulous.

NON-INTERVENTION

WHEN the lists are as plainly set for war across Europe as they are to-day, men forget the facts. Law ceases to have meaning; each diplomatic move is a manoeuvre for position or a desperate bid for peace; each newspaper headline is dictated under the strain of fear or passion. Let us, while we may, recall the essential facts. When the French Government, wisely in our view, calls for an agreement among the Powers not to intervene in Spain, it is itself, for reasons of expediency, neglecting the elementary rights of the Spanish Government whom the mass of French people are clamouring to help. For an agreement not to intervene implies a recognition of equal belligerent rights between the constitutional Government and the rebels who have suddenly plunged Spain and perhaps Europe into warfare. Of the nature of this rebellion there is no doubt. It is led, as revolutions in Spain have been at frequent intervals during the last century, by a clique of army officers. They had no backing among the Spanish masses. As the special correspondent of the *Times* put it in his remarkable dispatch printed last Wednesday: "The treason of the military chiefs was not only odious but stupid, for they must have known that their men were not with them, and should have been able to discern that the era of *pronunciamientos* is past." That they nevertheless took the risks of treason was due to their knowledge that they would be supported not only by a few Spanish industrialists, but also, and far more important, by Italian and German Fascism. Legally and morally to-day, the Spanish Government is entitled to buy all the munitions of war it likes from any available source, and the Russian and any other Government is strictly within its rights in offering money to the Madrid Government. Governments, on the other hand, which help General Franco, are committing acts of war against Spain. Yet, because the Spanish Government is of the Left and the rebels of the Right, the press presents the issue exactly as if the "Reds" were the rebels and the Fascists the defenders of legality. Even reputable papers in this country talk as if General Franco was at the head of a Government at war with Spain, while in the hysterical screams of the Rothermere press, the Fascist conspiracy has become a crusade for Christianity made by "loyalists" and "insurgent patriots." The pigeon-holes have once more been ransacked for the old atrocity stories and for photographs that are curiously reminiscent of those that once did service against the Germans, and which since the war have been periodically used against the Russians. Now they come in handy against Spain. Hundreds of thousands of deluded readers must by this time be persuaded that the fighting in Spain is the result of a Bolshevik rising.

The actual situation is that Spain is ruled by a weak Republican Government which, in fact, contains—though it is from the legal point of view irrelevant—neither Communists nor Socialists. Having good cause to fear that this Government would give way to a Socialist one, the secret Fascist conspiracy decided to strike. Left alone and with ordinary help from friendly Powers, the Spanish Government, supported as it is by the overwhelming mass of the Spanish people, would almost certainly crush the rebellion in Spain itself and in time probably succeed in regaining Morocco. If they succeed it will only be after a long and bitter struggle; there will be many executions and no doubt some incidental atrocities; there will be confusion rendered more difficult by the divergences of creed among the groups that are now united against Fascism. After a period of bloodshed and misery we might hope for the emergence of a Socialist Spain, with the ancient tyranny of the priest and the landlord broken and the prospect of a more constructive and prosperous era in the future. But if the Spanish Government is denied help from the democratic and Socialist Powers, while the rebels are fed from Portugal and supplied with money, aeroplanes and munitions from the Germans and Italians, the probabilities are that Fascism will triumph throughout the peninsula. In that case a white terror of the most ghastly proportions is inevitable. For only general massacre will subdue the mass of the Spanish people. And after that? A sparse and starved peasantry will continue to slave, as they have done from time immemorial, for an ignorant and lazy landlord class; the most reactionary Church in Europe will regain its hold, and Fascism will have established its crushing strangle-hold over another and strategically vital corner of Europe.

It is impossible for either France or Great Britain to stand by idle spectators of this life-and-death struggle. The issue for M. Blum and the French people is immediate and obvious. France stands to-day for the ideas and the system of government which Fascism is attempting to crush. If the Spanish Government is defeated, France is strategically helpless in a ring of Fascist States. French Fascists, too, wait their chance and it is believed by well-informed Frenchmen that Italian and German Fascism have already promised aid to the forces of reaction in France similar to that now being afforded to the Spanish rebels. How far their plans are advanced we do not know. At present French Fascism seems without leadership or courage. But so it did in Spain, and in any case no one doubts that the success of Spanish Fascism would be followed by civil war in France.

For French democracy, therefore, everything depends on the defeat of the Spanish rebels. But for M. Blum to give free rein to what must be his own inclination and to allow the feeling of the populace to overflow into active support of their Spanish comrades is to run a terrible risk. It is to risk war here and now with Germany and Italy at a time when the British Government and British opinion still seem unaware or indifferent to the issues which are at stake for herself as well as for France. Therefore, M. Blum is, we think, right in appealing for general neutrality even at the risk of incurring the charge of letting down the Spanish Government. In this at least he has British support; if the combined weight of Britain and France prevail with the Fascist Powers, he will have done the greatest possible service to Spain. If, as seems more likely, the Fascist Powers remember the Abyssinian war and thumb their noses at our protests, while Italian aeroplanes continue to carry black troops to conquer Spain, then perhaps M. Blum may hope that the British Government will sometime get tired of being mocked and awake to the position.

So far there is no sign of any awakening among the ruling classes in England. It looks indeed as if class feeling would override all other motives, even that of self-preservation. It was significant that General Franco should name, in his proclamation, three Powers as likely to be sympathetic with his rebellion, Germany, Italy, and Great Britain. British civil aeroplanes appear to be on their way to help the cause of treason, and a British flying Ace, who has arrived in Ceuta, is regarded by the rebels as an ambassador of British goodwill. The Gibraltar authorities seem to have favoured the rebels as against the Spanish Government and no single pronouncement has yet been made by any member of the British Government to suggest that they prefer constitutional democracy to armed conspirators and their Fascist abetters. The British Government seem to have learnt nothing from the Abyssinian humiliation. Yet they can no longer claim that by giving way to Mussolini they are procuring an ally against Hitler. They cannot any longer delude themselves that Italian expansion does not menace British interests in the Mediterranean. A Radical-Socialist or even a Communist Spain would be bound to keep on good terms with Britain as well as with France, while a Fascist Government would, with equal certainty, ally itself with Italy and Germany. It seems to be no idle rumour that General Franco has arranged for Italy to take the Balearic Islands and for Hitler to have a share of Morocco. Can it really be nothing—we ask in amazement that such a question should have to be asked—to this Government that General Franco's success would mean an Italian-German-Spanish Fascist alliance in the Mediterranean and that Britain would lose the control of the Straits of Gibraltar as she has already largely lost the control of the Suez? How long in this case would Great Britain retain her hold of Malta, Palestine, or Egypt?

These are not the grounds which awaken our sympathy with the Spanish people. We mention them because we are not yet convinced that a National Government can totally ignore the fate of the British Empire. For ourselves, we see the issue as a last hope for those States which have grown up in the common heritage of Western democracy. To-day, if the British Government could learn the lesson of the last year and associate itself with France in reminding the Fascist Powers that Spain is not Abyssinia, and that in helping General Franco they are inviting British as well as French democracy to give aid to the Spanish Government, there would still be a chance for Spain and Europe. If they negotiate for a bargain or a formula as they did when they thought that only a black Empire was at stake, they will not prevent war any more than they did in Abyssinia. Their next problem will be whether to take notice of a Fascist conquest of France. After that they really will be involved, for only England and the remains of the British Empire will be left in the West for German and Italian domination.

THE OLYMPIC SPIRIT

THE Olympic Committee has been wise in its decision to hold the next Games in Japan, for Fascists are certainly the people to run Olympic Games! In Germany last month you were not for one moment allowed to forget the Olympic Spirit. The pub, the smart lady, the street urchin and the Air Ministry alike all somewhere displayed the five interwoven rings which are the symbol of the Games. Gaiety and freedom were the order of the day, which meant that the foreigner could say and do what he liked: he would be met by the indulgent smile and the international camaraderie which Dr. Goebbels has ordained.

But I wonder how the Olympic Spirit will impress the visitor who steps for a moment out of the tourist machine into the everyday life of the country. True there is an industrial boom: Berlin has gone gay: there are as many courtesans on Kurfürstendamm as in the good old days and they are doing a good trade. But the most gullible Englishman will meet some odd contrasts. What, for instance, will he think of the traffic on the roads? He can motor miles without meeting a private car; but he will be constantly passed by enormous high-powered lorries and camouflaged armoured cars with the W.H. number plate of the army. If he happens, as I did, to motor through central Germany along a villainous main road half pavé and half sand he may see miles across a sea of corn a range of hills. When he comes near he will find that it is only another half-finished *Reichsautobahn* built high above the plain skirting towns and villages with two carriage-ways each as wide as the Dover Road. Will he wonder why such colossal roads are needed for so meagre traffic and why so little is done for the ordinary main thoroughfares? And will he smile at the solemn grace, "For this Work we thank our Führer," which he sees posted up beside them? Or he may wander over the gentle wooded slopes of Hessen and come upon great chimneyed factories—all brand new. Will he ask himself what they are producing? Probably not, but at least he cannot fail to see how in every town within the last year the pre-war barracks have risen phoenix-like with the brilliant plumage of new paint; and he will probably pass five or six aerodromes, the hangars deep underground with only a low line of barbed wire to show that they are there.

Such things as these cannot be hidden even during "the Olympic pause," as the Berlin Jews call it. They are open and undisguised for all to see. Hitler never hid his intentions from his party political opponents: he is not hiding them now from the nations which he threatens. Germany to-day is openly and defiantly a nation under arms.

The change since last year is remarkable. The rearmament then was still partially disguised, the people still talking about Left-wing and Right-wing developments in the Party. You still heard arguments about the cost of living, the danger of inflation and rivalries among the party bosses. Now (thanks to the Abyssinian tragedy and the militarisation of the Rhineland) a deep psychological transformation has occurred. Foreign policy is the sole non-Olympic topic and something approaching the pre-war spirit has been pumped into the nation. With the return of conscription and industrial prosperity the bourgeoisie has regained its bumptiousness. "We have our army now: German honour is restored, and England will be sensible enough to see that we get what we deserve. If not. . . . But that is impossible: we are of the same stock." I must have had that said to me in thirty different towns by thirty different middle-aged men with the same mixture of intimidation and blood-friendliness. It is clear that the assent to Hitler's foreign policy has often been among the working-classes grudging and uneasy, not the assent of reason, but of national pride and military tradition. As such it is all the more terrifying. Sullenly and reluctantly many one-time Socialists admit: "He was right after all. Only force could make England moral and France docile, only rearmament and conscription could reduce unemployment." As deeply as we feel ashamed that our Government has no foreign policy, the German is proud that Hitler is now the moving force in Europe, though he may add (as one young scientist said to me), "I know it may end in the breakdown of civilisation, but if so I can't help feeling proud that it is we who are leading the way to Hell and you who are following meekly after."

This queer feeling of self-immolatory acquiescence is difficult to describe. It is not enthusiasm; it is far removed from a buoyant happiness. It is more like the old strung-up exhilaration so noticeable in pre-revolution days in all the political parties. Only now it is unified, and the last tatters of the belief in the use of reason have gone. The nation is homogeneously neurotic: religiously united to rush headlong into the abyss—together. The yearning for "togetherness" is indeed the most noticeable feature of German life. The nation moves—the sexes segregated—in squads or groups. It marches until it is so tired that it forgets that there are no eggs and that butter is prohibitively dear. I spent two days camping among the pines of the Bohemian forest. All day long squads of boys marched along the roads, generally in heavy rain, without overcoats and with heavy packs. They were amazingly fit; their morale was fine and they were in a way happy; but in those gloomy mountains, especially at night when the drums beat all round, I had a queer feeling that history had moved back a thousand years and the mountain clans were gathering for the fight, huddling together round their camp fires.

How deeply this "togetherness" permeates life is best illustrated by two small incidents. Walking home one evening in the Harz Mountains I met the son of the forester with whom we had supped the night before. He was quite alone strolling along with a butterfly net in his hand. I felt a sudden start of surprise: he was the first boy I had seen in Germany on his own, doing what he as an individual liked to do, and he seemed strangely out of place in the third Reich. A fortnight later I was in a café in Nuremberg when a Salvation Army lassie came up to me with a collecting box. I asked her if the Salvation Army catered for Aryan and Jew alike? She replied, "I am asked that question by different people for different purposes. Why do you want to know?" When I pressed her she looked hurriedly round and said, "There are very few of us here in Nuremberg and it is not wise to talk about these things." Rather cruelly I said I wasn't satisfied and then she leant across and said, "Jesus Christ is our Leader and His words are plain. I follow Him." It is impossible to express how oddly those words sounded in Nuremberg. She was the first German who had said "*I* follow Him"; all the others said, "*We* follow him."

But strangest of all is the experience of crossing the frontier. I crossed both to Danzig and to France. We arrived at Danzig late and strolling down the main street we were immediately aware of a disturbing change in the atmosphere. It was some minutes before I realised that the noise of people chattering on the streets is positively frightening to ears attuned to the cautious murmur of a German city. Heaven knows there is terror enough in Danzig, but the Danziger still has a sense of freedom and of individuality. First impressions of France were, if anything, more remarkable. We had motored all day from Speyer and arrived late at night in a small provincial French town. I sat down in a tawdry café: the people were ugly and badly dressed, mostly of the *petit bourgeoisie*, but it was extraordinarily exciting to sit and watch them quietly talking together, for these ordinary French people were actually *listening to each other* as though each was interested in what the other was saying. In fact, they were individuals discussing their problems, and for a whole month I had not seen individuals or heard conversation. In Germany you cannot converse; you can only speechify alternately. And you do not listen because you have heard it all before.

Perhaps it is silly to attach too much importance to impressions such as these. But with regard to Nazi Germany they are all you can now get. For public opinion has been killed,

and in its place there has grown up "public feeling" the atmosphere of the group. This month Dr. Goebbels has turned on the Olympic atmosphere, and the German has welcomed it as a relief from the politisation to which he has been subjected for three years. He has gone Olympic with the same hectic exaltation which he must always feel if he is not to become lonely and isolated from the herd. When Dr. Goebbels changes the roll, the pianola will play another tune. That is why Germany is now the finest fighting nation in Europe. For it is not enthusiasm or the joy of battle, but acquiescent surrender to group guidance which the modern general needs. The Communists are still heroically at work, but Hitler, thanks largely to British foreign policy, has won the masses. From now on a revolution must begin inside the Nazi party or not at all.

R. H. S. CROSSMAN

A LONDON DIARY

THE entire Conservative press is now on the side of the rebels in Spain. Lord Rothermere's papers are what anyone who has followed their past history would expect. Every rumour, every bit of chit-chat from a British visitor who has never before realised that Spain was anything but a tourist resort for retired rentiers, becomes the basis for wild charges and sickening atrocity-mongering. (No doubt there are "atrocities" on both sides, but we know nothing of the White ones.) The Moscow broadcasts, legally asking for money to help the Spanish Government, are used to excuse a demand for a holy war against Bolshevism. (The "Left," by the way, is not predominantly Communist in Spain, but anarcho-syndicalist.) Nothing does more harm to England's good name on the Continent than the Paris Edition of the *Daily Mail*, which is taken by foreigners to represent British opinion. The Beaverbrook press has invented a joke of its own by speaking of the Government troops as "loyal" (in inverted commas). What the inverted commas mean it would be difficult to say. But none of this compares in importance to the attitude of the *Times* and the *Telegraph*. It is only when their policy agrees in its more sober way that the gutter press becomes influential.

* * *

The *Times* has so far kept its head, but not, as Mr. Julian Huxley's letter in this journal this week shows, avoided an intellectual confusion which betrays sympathy with those who it would like not to have to admit are rebels conspiring against a constitutional Government. It is surely an astonishing thing that no protest should come from England when pirates (for that is what General Franco's ships and aeroplanes are) drop bombs and fire guns across the bows of British battleships. I never expected to see so complete a justification of the Marxian thesis that class ultimately over-rides all other considerations. It is lamentable that the British Embassy should at this time be over the frontier, out of touch with the Spanish Government, a convenient centre for fugitive hysteria. Distinguished correspondents with the rebel troops fall naturally into accepting their state of mind. I choose a significant sentence from Sir Percival Phillips' despatch to the *Daily Telegraph* on Thursday of this week:

> Fascist courts-martial are being held in towns where the principal officials openly sided with the Communists. There was one yesterday at Huelva where the civil governor, a lieutenant-colonel of the Civil Guards and a lieutenant-colonel of carabineers were shot.

Or, in other and more accurate words, officials and army officers were murdered because they remained loyal to the Government whose sworn servants they were. If they had been disloyal and shot by the Government this would have been a Communist atrocity.

* * *

I am told on authority that is usually reliable that the British Government is trying to bring about peace in Spain by the proposal to both sides that they cease fighting and retain those parts of Spain which they now hold. This suggestion, well-intentioned no doubt, but comic in the circumstances, recalls a similar piece of futility in 1919. At the height of the civil war in Russia when Denikin held the south of the Ukraine, when Kolchak was in Siberia and the Mensheviks held the Caucasus, the British proposed to both sides a meeting in Prinkipo at which Russia should be divided up as it then stood. It may appear strange in the light of subsequent history that it was the Whites who refused and the Reds who accepted the invitation to this conference!

* * *

A leading article in this journal a fortnight ago revealed that the Government is actually receiving the vital machine tools it needs for rearmament from Germany which, in exchange, is itself importing raw materials for rearmament from the British Dominions. I now hear that this followed the breakdown of negotiations between the Government and certain firms which might have laid down plant for manufacturing these tools in this country. The firms said that the demand might be inadequate as long as peace lasted and asked for a guarantee of profit which the Government was unable to give. Rather than agree to their terms, the Government purchases from Germany. But why does not the Government set up its own factories? Where, if there is another war, are the tools to come from? Are we relying on purchase from the United States or is it assumed that Germany will be our ally?

* * *

The article by Mr. Louis Fischer which appeared in this journal last week raised in the most challenging way the question of the speed with which "the dictatorship of the proletariat" can, if a Socialist State is not molested, give way to a far more complete form of democracy than the world has yet seen. The trouble, as I understand it, is that in any revolutionary situation the secret police become a separate State within the State, a power which the civil authorities cannot control, even when they want to do so. There is no doubt that Stalin was reducing the G.P.U.'s powers before the murder of Kiroff. Since then—and particularly recently, I understand—the G.P.U. has been unpleasantly active. The new constitution certainly means a drastic reduction of its powers. But there are two things that the Russian Government, now moving towards democracy, might do further to reassure us. Surely it might, now that it is strong, release political prisoners—I do not know how many there are—and it might give an authoritative interpretation of Article 127. "No one may be subjected to arrest except upon the decision of a court *or with the sanction of the prosecutor*." Can we be assured that the public prosecutor is to be the servant of the Civil Government and not of the G.P.U.?

* * *

I am glad that Dick Sheppard has accepted Mr. Churchill's challenge and written to Hitler for permission to preach Christian pacifism in Germany. Hitler, I imagine, is not very likely to reply. He has not even deigned to answer the British Government's letter posing him some very pertinent questions about the substance of his twenty-five years peace offer. Hitler only replies when he can see propaganda value in answering and his emissaries here are likely to report that Canon Sheppard is not the sort of pacifist who would devote his speech on German soil to explaining that the Treaty of Versailles was an abomination and that Germany ought to have a lot of niggers in the tropics to enslave. Dick Sheppard would, I take it, ask young Germans to sign a pledge not to participate in war. If any of them obeyed his advice they would at once qualify for indefinite incarceration in a concentration camp. So one may safely assume that no peace campaign will take place in Nazi Germany.

* * *

I shall be surprised if the Communist application for affiliation to the Labour Party is successful at the coming Annual Conference. But it is already clear that it will receive enough support to give Transport House a shock. Decisions at the Conference depend on the massed vote of the big Unions. On this issue the miners will provide a solid block of something like 400,000 votes in favour of affiliation and they will be

supported, I gather, by the distributive workers, the locomotive engineers and by several other smaller Union votes. The railwaymen, the general workers, the transport and textile operatives and railway clerks will almost certainly be united against affiliation. The engineers and builders will both, I expect, be divided—some of the Unions give only a general instruction and leave it to their delegates to come to a final decision on the eve of the Conference itself. How the local Labour Parties, which count for so absurdly little in the count, will divide, no one can know, of course, until the vote itself. But from the number of resolutions sent in supporting affiliation it is clear that the Communist decision to work solidly in support of Labour candidates in the last election has had a very substantial effect. What I myself expect is a platform victory against affiliation, but so large a vote and so strong a feeling for working with Communists that the virulent anti-Communist attitude of the *Daily Herald* and Transport House will have in practice to be modified after the Conference.

* * *

The habit of listing things in alphabetical order for purposes of reference occasionally produces some pleasing juxtapositions, and nowhere more than in the London Telephone Directory. Having occasion the other day for the address of one of those irritating institutions whose exact name one has forgotten, but knows it might be "Society for the . . ." "National Association for the . . ." or any other of half a dozen possible appellations, I discovered the following three bodies nestling one below the other: Society for Promoting the Training of Women, Society for Spreading the Knowledge of True Prayer, Society for the Development of British Mushroom Culture—this last, I felt, dangerously ambiguous in its context. Below them were listed the Society of Professional Men and the Society of Progressive Souls (Limited). Best of all, perhaps, were this pair, also in juxtaposition: the Society of Trade Creditors and the Society of the Divine Compassion. One felt like suggesting to them a mutual exchange of directors.

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Miss B. E. Gwyer.

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

5,000 books wanted by gentleman, for recently purchased country house, to fill library. Subject immaterial, but must be clean. No dealers.—*South Bucks Free Press.*

The Rev. C. Ensor Walters, President of the Methodist Conference, was presented by some of his Methodist friends, at Central Hall, Westminster, last night, with a saloon car.

He said: "It will be God's chariot. It will not be for joy-riding. I hand it over to the service of God."

Mr. Walters added that he hoped he and his wife would go in the car on a holiday to Cornwall to-day.—*Daily Express.*

A woman who was granted a maintenance order at Bristol yesterday said that her husband treated her like a servant and insisted on her calling him "sir."

She added that she had to clean his boots and fetch his razor when he shaved, and that he had told her to speak up promptly when he asked her questions.

"I did it to keep the peace," she said.—*Daily Dispatch.*

With regard to Lord Strabolgi's suggestion (that there should be R.A.F. women pilots) he (Lord Swinton) said he could not agree that a fighting formation, such as the reserve would be, should recruit women pilots. War was a beastly enough thing, and he did not want to add to it.—*Daily Herald.*

On going to bed at night the hair should be brushed thoroughly, arranged comfortably and carefully in case of a burglar, a fireman or a policeman. They are all men, too, you know, and should be considered.—*Daily Sketch.*

Your Ladyship,—Can't something be done about Spain before our politicians commit us—as they did over Italy? The disgusting *British* Broadcasting Corporation's equally revolting references (in the second news on July 25th) to "*Loyal* troops" and "Rebels" made my blood boil. I do not pretend to be a politician, thank God, but it did seem to me a bit unnecessary for a so-called impartial body to "air" their views thus. I had thought that loyal troops were those who fought *for* the King—and for their country. It seems, though, that these are the Rebels—according to the B.B.C. Now we know!—Letter in *Saturday Review.*

No matter what the Spanish Government is supposed to be or not to be, and no matter what the anti-Government forces are called, the one clear thing is that the struggle now going forward in Spain is, as Mr. Alfred Denville, M.P., rightly declares, "a battle between Christ and the Communist." Not in a purely political struggle are churches burned and pillaged by scores, priests and nuns murdered and outraged in hundreds.—*Evening News.*

CONTEMPT OF COURT

[We have arranged with "Barrister" to contribute regular comments on current legal topics. His first article, on "The Police and Their Powers," appeared on July 18 and his second, on "Ulster and Westminster," on July 25.—Ed. *N.S. & N.*]

LAST week two newspapers were heavily fined for criminal contempt of court. Their offence consisted in publishing statements relative to the Constitution Hill incident, which, even if true, would not be admissible at the trial of the man charged in connection with what then occurred, and which might, if read by potential jurors, influence them for or against the prisoner.

Criminal contempt of court consists of, as in this case, publishing matter prejudicial to pending criminal proceedings, of scandalising the judges or of disturbing the sittings of the court. It is, of course, legitimate to criticise a judge's decision; "scandalising" a judge means attacking his impartiality or his fitness for his post. It is the theory of the English Constitution that judges are entirely above political or social prejudice. It is permissible to point out that judges are nominated by the Prime Minister from the socially restricted circle of the Bar and sometimes from the ranks of his own political supporters in the House of Commons. But it would be legally contemptuous to suggest that in the case of any given judge his social or political past could make him unfit to give a fair trial in any case where social or political prejudice might enter.

In 1899 Lord Morris, delivering a judgment in the Privy Council, remarked that in England contempt for "scandalising" a judge was obsolete, but it might be used in the more backward colonial countries to preserve a proper respect for justice. A year later a practice which was thought only to apply to the Colonies was revived in England, and since the war a number of newspapers, including the *New Statesman*, have been heavily punished for this offence.

The procedure used in trying cases of criminal contempt is similar to, and is indeed historically descended from, the procedure used by the Court of Star Chamber.

The case is heard summarily, usually by three judges, there are no jury and no appeal, and the power of the judges to fine and imprison is unlimited. Oswald, the great nineteenth-century authority on contempt, wrote of it: "It may surprise some people to know that according to the law of England the liberty of the subject may at any time be summarily interfered with for an indefinite period at the will of an individual for an alleged offence, the limits of which offence in its nature it puzzles lawyers strictly or even adequately to define."

Even in the case of contempts committed in the face of the court the form of procedure is not historically very old. Thus in the early part of the seventeenth century when a prisoner abused the judge for convicting him and, as the law French of the period put it, "ject un brickbat a le dit justice que narrowly mist," he was indicted and tried in the ordinary way. But in this type of criminal contempt summary procedure

became firmly established long before it did in the other cases, and when in 1877 a disappointed litigant threw an egg at Vice-Chancellor Malins on the bench, the judge immediately committed him to prison, remarking only, "Perhaps he intended it for my brother Bacon."

But in so far as scandalising the judges or commenting on pending trials are concerned, the doctrine of contempt was laid down in one of the Wilkes cases by that great eighteenth-century lawyer, Chief Justice Wilmot. A printer, Almon by name, was brought before the judges for having published an attack on the Lord Chancellor in relation to one of Wilkes' cases. Mr. Justice Wilmot, as he then was, was about to give judgment when it was discovered that the proceedings had been started as Rex *v.* Wilkes. Wilmot pleaded with Almon's counsel "to be a gentleman" and allow the slip to be put right, but counsel refused and Wilmot's judgment was never delivered. After his death it was found among his papers and published. Upon this undelivered decision "for which," Sir William Holdsworth wrote in his *History of English Law*, "there was little, if any, authority," has been founded almost the whole of the modern practice with regard to criminal contempts committed outside the precincts of the courts.

Were the power of the judges to punish summarily for contempt abolished the ordinary law to deal with anyone who "scandalised" a judge or who interfered with a pending trial would still remain. Before Almon's case, in the majority of instances at any rate, persons committing criminal contempt were dealt with by criminal information or indictment. Indeed, as late as 1902, this course was followed with the editor of a Bristol newspaper who prejudiced a trial by publishing the result of inquiries by his special "Crime Investigator."

In 1906, and again 1908, the House of Commons carried resolutions criticising the present procedure with regard to contempt, and it was then generally felt that it threw an unfair burden on the judges by compelling them to try the offender summarily without the help of a jury and to sentence him without any statutory guidance as to the punishment to be imposed.

BARRISTER

FEAR OF HEIGHTS

"Do you like mountains?" asked my friend when he heard that I was going for a holiday to the Rocky Mountains. "No," I replied. "Neither do I," said he; "but, much as I loathe all mountains, I don't think I have ever seen any quite so repulsive as the Rockies." "Good," said I, for I like to hear discouraging reports of any new place that I am about to visit. This prevents disillusionment later on. Imagine that you are going to a Paradise, and if the place does not come up to your expectations, you may be tempted to regard it as a Purgatory. Imagine that you are going to a Purgatory, on the other hand, and you will probably discover enough beauty in it to elate you into thinking of it as a demi-Paradise.

My chief fear was, not that I should find the Rockies repulsively ugly, but that I should find them too high. I imagined that, as I passed through them by train, I should at many points be unable to look out of the window for fear of giddiness. I pictured the train as travelling for mile after mile along a narrow ledge on the edge of a sheer precipice thousands of feet high. "But the train's not the worst," said my friend; "whatever you do, don't let them take you a motor trip up the mountains. I went out one day in a motor coach, and the driver stopped to show us the view at one place with one of the wheels over the edge of a precipice. I have never had such a terrifying experience in my life." "Help!" said I. "But, at least, if any accident happens to you in such places the great thing is that you would be killed outright and not merely mutilated." "There's always that to be said for it," said my friend.

After this conversation, it was with considerable apprehension that I looked forward to my holiday. As I lay in bed at night, I had visions of myself being whirled round precipices near the tops of mountains, and wondered whether I could survive it—I who feel uncomfortable even when walking across Waterloo Bridge. To these apprehensions my *alter ego* replied very solemnly: "What man has endured, man can endure." "That's the formula," I said, greatly cheered; "but, even so, nothing will persuade me to enter a motor coach in the Rocky Mountains."

And so across the ocean and through a field of icebergs in a dense fog.

"I wish I had stayed at home," I said to myself, as the blast of the foghorn seemed to shake the ship at one-minute intervals, "but what man has endured, man can endure." And we continued to throw dice for pennies in the Knickerbocker Bar till bedtime. And so from Montreal, eating and sleeping in the train, day after day, night after night, speeding our way through the most anti-alcoholic country in the British Empire, till we reached Calgary. It was somewhere near Calgary in the early morning that we caught our first glimpse of the Rockies, eighty miles away. How charming they looked in the distance, a little low line of irregular hills, pearly and insubstantial in the morning light. No snow on their tops. In fact, nothing to worry about. "These mountains," I said to myself, "are perfectly enchanting. They cannot be much higher than the South Downs."

We made our way gradually up to Banff without a precipitous prospect to trouble us. Mountains more majestic began to tower above us, but, though we were between 4,000 and 5,000 feet high, we seemed at the foot of them to be almost in the lowlands. How glorious were their shapes as the landscape changed! Ranges of ash-grey peaks lit up by the sun, bare and barren rocks of a beauty that one had not dreamed of, alternated with spruce-covered heights, with rivers sometimes milky and sometimes pale green, pouring through the valleys. Then came majestic mountains ten or eleven thousand feet high, looking like fortresses, castles and cathedrals that had been built by Titans on the roof of the world for security against gods more barbarous than themselves. I asked some one on the train: "What is that mountain that looks like an enormous cathedral?" "It happens," he said, "to be called Cathedral Mountain." The comparison must have been obvious to the first white man who saw it; but the priests and the worshippers have been dead, and the organ silent for a hundred thousand years.

And so we sped on, a Yorkshireman gasping "Incredible," and a Somerset man murmuring "Marvellous," till a Welshman said "Who's got a bottle?" Whereupon we all remembered that Canada is a curiously dry country and, feeling even drier than Canada, made our way along the train to the sleeping-cabin that contained the frowned-on treasure. But we did not remain there long. The Rocky Mountains on a fine summer's day are more intoxicating even than mountain dew, and soon we were out in the observation car again gazing at the perpetual novelty of snow-capped peaks, forest-clad slopes, gorges, rushing rivers, waterfalls pouring from the tops of the mountains under the wheels of the train—we were on a ledge by now, but a ledge seemed to be the perfect position from which to survey so beautiful a world—and following the course of the Kicking Horse River, which, while it flows one way, seems all the time to be fighting hard against itself and doing its utmost to turn in its tracks among the stones and flow the other way. It seemed a sin that night should fall on such a world, but night fell and some one said: "What about a drink?" and we made our way to the sleeping-cabin, murmuring "Incredible," "Marvellous," "Indescribable," and all the words that do not describe anything. And even then we were not satisfied, but returned to the blowing winds and cinders of the observation car and sat out under the moon and stars.

Later came the motoring trips. I had sworn to avoid them, but man does not choose his destiny. If he did, he would miss a great deal of enchantment. The fact is, that there was so much enchantment in the drive from Field to the Yoho Valley, to beautiful Emerald Lake (which is really jade-coloured), and to Lake Louise (entrancing under the moun-

tains), that I can remember as little of it in detail as of a perfect dream. It is true that we stopped on ledges to look at the view, but all four wheels were on the ledges at each stop. On Switchback Hill—which is Boscastle multiplied by an astronomer—the Somerset man said: "My hat, suppose the steering gear went wrong"; but the steering gear did not go wrong. When we arrived at Lake Louise, 5,000 feet above sea-level, two of the party began to be height-conscious and withdrew to their rooms. But by the next morning they had grown accustomed to the mountain air, and were ready to take their seats in the motor coach for Banff.

Since then I have driven a good deal through the Rockies and the most alarming moments I have been through were due, not to the occasional precipitous slopes above which the road winds, but to the bad driving of some of the visitors. The roads for the most part curl in and out, with only a log-rail a foot high as a protection on the edge of the declivity. And, as there is just room for two cars to pass, one is occasionally startled by meeting a car swinging round a corner on the wrong side of the road without warning and pulling in to the right only just in time to avoid disaster. One man nearly crashed into us at a high corner, and, to save himself, went into a skid on the oily surface of the road that might have taken him into eternity. No one seems to think of hooting at corners. If everybody did, perhaps, the Rockies would resound with perpetual hooting, for you meet almost as many motor cars on these mountain roads as you meet on a week-day in the country parts of Wiltshire. You scarcely ever see a pedestrian; you seldom see a house; and you may drive all day without seeing a town. But you are never long without meeting a motor car.

To some people the multiplication of tourists, the provision of good roads, the building of hotels and bungalow camps may seem a detraction from the majesty of the Rockies. For myself, I like to find some of the amenities of civilisation among the mountains. Wild nature is here on so vast a scale as to be beyond spoiling by the hand of man. Edward Whymper is quoted in the guide-books as having described the Canadian Rockies as fifty Switzerlands thrown into one; and man and his works must always be inconspicuous in so enormous and towering a wilderness. Man cannot destroy the jagged spires of the tall mountains, with their crowning processions of spruce clearly outlined against the crystalline evening sky. These are mountains such as A. E. saw in visions. To sit beneath them and watch the nighthawks diving over the fast-flowing river, silver in the twilight, is to experience a rapture of contentment—to feel that nothing more beautiful was ever created on this very beautiful earth.

Repulsive? Why, I saw an eagle yesterday from my bedroom window. Y. Y.

CONSTRUCTIVE PACIFISM

ALDOUS HUXLEY'S new novel differs from its predecessors in one important respect: it preaches a doctrine and pleads a cause. For my part, I think it none the worse for that. The view that literature should confine itself to the office of entertainment derives no support from the practice of the greatest masters of the art, whose primary purpose in writing seems to have been less to amuse the world than to give it a piece of their minds. The fact that the piece of a great writer's mind, instead of being served up in sermon form like Sunday evening's cold mutton, appears embedded in an appetising literary stew, sweetened with humour, enriched with character drawing and spiced with wit, does not mean that the cook was not a moralist; it only means that he was an artist as well. For the difference between writing dully and writing entertainingly is not the difference between writing about serious subjects and writing about frivolous ones, but is the difference between being a dull and being an entertaining person. Huxley could not write dully to save his life. But the fact that he has chosen to present his doctrine in a setting of epigram should not be allowed to distract our attention from his passionate sincerity.

Briefly, it is as follows: We all want peace in the world, but we are at present pursuing it by mistaken methods, those, namely, of politics and diplomacy. These can never bring peace by themselves, and the League of Nations is nothing but a bog in which pacifists lose themselves pursuing the will-o'-the-wisp of collective security. For there can never be peaceful relations between nations until there are peaceful relations between men, and there cannot be peaceful relations between men until men harbour peaceful thoughts towards one another in their hearts—until, not to mince words, they love one another. Nothing very new about all this, the reader says to himself. On the contrary, it is precisely this same exhortation to love one another that has been dinned into the ears of mankind ever since Christ died on the Cross, with so little apparent effect that after two thousand years of the treatment the moral standards and behaviour of the crowds of modern Ealing are in all essentials indistinguishable from those of the crowds of ancient Athens.

An American sage once wrote to the present writer, upbraiding him, in common with many of his contemporaries, for continuing so anxiously to ponder the problem of the future of our civilisation when he had, he said, received, in a moment of divine communication, a revelation which solved once and for all the troubles of mankind. "The solution," he said, "is really quite simple. It is only necessary that men should love one another." Polite to correspondents, I thanked him for his revelation and asked him how he proposed that it should be applied. To this he returned somewhat curtly that he considered it enough for one man to have made such a discovery, and was prepared to leave it to his lesser contemporaries to work out its application.

Less magnificently remote, Huxley is prepared to give advice in the art of loving. Since large numbers of our fellow creatures are not at first sight obviously lovable, it is clear that some change is required in the potential lover. He must, in short, learn to control and to discipline himself. But what is the self? It is not clear, but this at least may be safely affirmed—it is an organism which is, or which contains, both mind and body. Our control of it must, therefore, in the first place be physical, following the lines recommended by F. M. Alexander in his book *The Use of the Self*—we sit wrongly and we stand abominably, says Alexander; therefore, we must first learn to use our bodies rightly in sitting and standing; there is also the control of breathing—and in the second place mental, an adaptation, perhaps, of what the Catholics call "mental prayer," the Indians yogi, and the Japanese "zen." Groups of constructive pacifists pledged to the mastery of this psychological technique should be formed all over the country. Ultimately we may hope that these groups or cells will be able so to permeate the whole body of the community as to render warlike measures by that community impossible. For a community so permeated will be actively engaged in loving other communities, and communities no less than people become lovable through being loved. All other policies designed to secure peace are doomed to failure, for means determine ends and the fact that one sets out forcibly to attain a desirable end means that the end, becoming insensibly transformed in the process of its pursuit, turns out on attainment to be no longer desirable.

Summarised thus shortly, the doctrine of constructive pacifism sounds bald, even silly; but as Huxley expounds it, it is neither bald nor silly. He possesses, indeed, that supreme merit of a writer, the merit of making righteousness readable, and the quips and the gibes and the witticisms which rise so readily to one's mocking tongue are so completely outclassed by the bitterer quips, the juicier gibes, and the brighter witticisms of Huxley's own characters that they fall stillborn from one's lips.

Nevertheless, the position seems to be exposed to a number of obvious objections. What, one wants to know, is the ultimate purpose of the policy? To stop war? But, as Huxley himself concedes in his pamphlet *What Are You Going to Do About It?* "pacifists may have the best will in the world, but . . . they will be able to do very little to cure the disease once it

has broken out." Is it, then, to prevent war? Huxley's answer, apparently, is Yes. Now it is clear that if enough people in this country could be induced to join the new order of constructive pacifists, to love their fellows, to abstain from resistance to violence, to affirm in every thought, word and deed the unity of man, there would be no war. It is not equally clear that there would be no invasion. For it is obviously not much use for the sheep to pass resolutions in favour of vegetarianism, while the wolves remain convinced meat-eaters. But let us concede that the potentially invading wolves, touched by the attitude of the constructively pacifist sheep, call off the invasion or fail to devour the sheep, or even become sheep themselves. Is the hypothesis of a mass conversion sufficient to preclude participation in a war by the people of this country a plausible one? So far as the existing situation is concerned, it is not. It is possible that for *political* reasons an embarrassingly large number of people might refuse participation in a war declared by this Government, but not for the reasons of constructive pacifism.

It might be said—Huxley does in fact hint—that the Government's knowledge of the existence and possible spread of constructive pacifism might influence its foreign policy and cause it to refrain from courses liable to provoke war upon which it might otherwise have embarked. Some weight may be attached to this argument, but not, I am afraid, very much. Whatever may be the character of the next war, it is fairly clear that the factor of numbers will count much less than in the last. Granted that the technicians and the airmen are loyal, the pacifism of many intellectuals and some workmen would not seriously embarrass the Government. Nor do I think it can be plausibly maintained that the mere fact of persecution would increase the number of constructive pacifists. The prospect of being thrown to the lions did not deter early Christians, but I doubt if it actually created them, and the willingness of members of the new order to be martyred is not in itself sufficient to make a mass movement.

There is, I think, an objection more serious than any of these. How is the world to be delivered from its present anarchy? In the long run, we are, I think, all agreed, by the supersession of national sovereignties and the establishment of some kind of world government. Can constructive pacifism work for this consummation? I take it that it cannot, since such a government would need to be backed by force for precisely the same reason as a national government needs to be backed by force, which is not that people obey the law unwillingly and through fear of the consequences if they break it, but because without law and without force to back it every form of civilised activity, the researching of the scientist, the composing of the musician, the enjoyment of family life and the intercourse of friends can be held to ransom by the anti-social thug. Now, some anti-social thugs there will be among nations no less than among individuals for many years to come; and whatever organisation is ultimately devised for transacting the affairs of a civilised society must be able to call upon force in their restraint. I even doubt whether the constructive pacifist can consistently support a national government. I recently asked a signer of the Dick Sheppard pledge with what logic, since he disavowed the use of force by the League, he supported the police in his own country. His first reaction was to deny the justice of the analogy. The policeman, he said, does not take life. But this, as I pointed out to him, would not do. For the police force is an integral part of a whole system which involves the forcible restraint of men's bodies, and in extreme cases the taking of their lives. It is bound up with the prison and the scaffold, and, more, it is supported in emergency by the Army and the whole lethal armoury of war. At this he had the hardihood to be logical and to admit that, if the decision lay with him, he would abolish the police force and see what happened. For my part, I should like what happened even less than I like what happens to-day. And I conclude, therefore, that Huxley's policy entails as a logical corollary an anarchism within the State which would wreck civilisation no less effectively than the wars against which it is devised.

Though I cannot agree with the policy, I applaud it and I am glad that it should have been put forward. About it there blow the winds of a high idealism which does everybody good. It will be a long time yet before the practice of the world squares with its professions, but the first step is for its professions to condemn its practice. This step, so far as the professions of the Churches in regard to the practice of war are concerned, has yet to be taken. The policy, again, has a strong emotional appeal for many who remain unmoved by the comparatively humdrum propaganda of collective security. At the present moment, when thousands of disgruntled supporters of the League are throwing up the collective security sponge in disgust, it is particularly fortunate that a fully reasoned policy of pure pacifism should be waiting and ready for their acceptance, to prevent them from going over into the enemy's camp. For to become a constructive pacifist is to take on a full-time job. Equally with Communism and Fascism, it utilises all the energies, it absorbs all the loyalties of its adherents, calling them to the discipline of its psychological technique and the tactics of its permeating cells. It is, therefore, pre-eminently a creed for modern youth. Peace may be worked for at different levels and by different methods, and although I personally do not believe that Huxley's is the most immediately effective method, there can be nothing but admiration for one who has taken off the isolating armour of his satire and his wit and come down defenceless into the market place to preach a creed that he believes will save the world.

C. E. M. JOAD

NAZI ! NAZI !

The Olympic Games must and will . . . carry on propaganda . . . chiefly along the lines of culture. Germany has many suitable organisations for this purpose, including "Strength Through Joy," "Hitler Youth" and "League of German Maidens."—*National Zeitung.*

We are facing a conspiracy of the entire sub-human world of a degenerate continent against . . . Germanism.—*Deutsche Freiheit.*

Nazi culture burning bright
With its nordic-Grecian light,
What sub-human dare defy
Its full totemic majesty?

Greek to species who are not
Aryan to the final clot,
Its ethnic-ethic-technic dwells
In nordic livestock's sacred cells.

Stainless Aryan youth-bands now
Teach the tourist Herr and Frau,
That all folk-stems may in turn
Kraft durch Schadenfreude learn.

Arts of blood by bloodbaths purged,
In pan-Germanic sunburst merged,
Will their rays as they aspire
Come to set the Thames on fire?

Nazi! Nazi! burning bright
In Europe's deep degenerate night,
Who but Nazis can descry
Thy primitive sublimity?

SAGITTARIUS

Correspondence

THE SPANISH SITUATION

SIR,—Returning to this country from Spain I have been shocked by the failure of English people to understand the gravity of the present international situation. From behind a screen of Olympiad and holiday news they see it dimly as a local struggle, in a rather remote country, between a weak Left Government and a patriotic army. Even that limited view of it has been warped by the sensational papers. The vilest atrocity stories have been concocted in order to sway sympathies emphatically to one side—and that not the side of a legitimate, newly-elected

Government suddenly taken in the rear by a treacherous attack from a section of its own military forces.

Perhaps some of these stories are true: most of them obviously are not. In summer Catalonia and the Balearic Islands are full of fashionable pleasure-seekers, to whom the sight of a workman in authority is distressing, the sight of an armed workman quite enough to upset the mental balance. Yet the revolt came so suddenly that the Catalan State had little time to consider the tourist traffic; power and responsibility fell naturally into the hands of these coatless, often unshaven, unionists.

As to how they used it, I give my own experience. I lived in a small village some miles north of Barcelona, overlooking the main road to France. The district was an industrial one, and from the morning of the revolt was policed entirely by armed workers and peasants. My neighbours were middle-class Spaniards who knew all the gossip and discussed it in the *calle* from dawn till after midnight; they would have been quick to relate atrocities if they had heard of any. Our houses were searched by an armed party when shots were fired at a military lorry (this was the outbreak of a neurotic youth who was not caught) but the house-searching was carried out by these unionists with courtesy and even with apologies.

Trams and trains having ceased to run, my wife and I had on one occasion to walk twelve miles home from Barcelona through the chief industrial suburbs. We did not see a single case of drunkenness or looting; we suffered no kind of interference from the guards who lined the roads. Nor did I meet anyone who had worse experiences, though I have heard a good deal of talk from retired Blimps about "those ruffians with rifles and dirty sandshoes."

Revenge on institutions, not on people; that seemed to be the instinct in Catalonia, and though many churches were burned, General Boded and his captured officers are still safe at Montjuich.

But the mood and behaviour of the Spanish people during those days of stress is not the urgent question now. Desperately urgent is the need to remove the suspicion of the French masses that British sympathy in this conflict is on the same side as Germany's and Italy's. Resentment is bitter among them, especially in the South. Their papers are full of stories of Spanish war-vessels being refused supplies at Gibraltar, of British mystery-ships, of Campbell Black, the English ace, arriving at Ceuta and saying that if he were given enough bombs he would clean up all the "Reds" in Guadarrama.

Better informed than the English masses, they hear rumours of deals between General Franco and the Fascist Powers: meanwhile they see their own Government forced to remain inactive. In such circumstances their eagerness for intervention may at any moment lead to ugly riots. Disorder, mild suppressive measures by the Government, the beginnings of chaos. What a chance for the Croix de Guerre and other Fascist bodies!

Civil war in France just now would be an even more fatal affair than the conflict in Spain. Every British resource should be strained to avert it and to allay French anxieties. The formation of a Popular Front here on the widest possible basis is urgent: it could bring a steady pressure on the Government to stand loyally by M. Blum in his desperate fight for democratic institutions in France and Europe. VANCE PALMER

[Mr. Vance Palmer is an English novelist without party affiliations. —ED. *N.S. & N.*]

SPANISH NEWS: A QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

SIR,—I have been employing the *Times* as guinea-pig in a rather crude experiment. I have been through all news items and articles concerning the Spanish rebellion in the issues of July 20th to 23rd inclusive, and again those of July 27th to 30th inclusive, i.e., the first four since the outbreak and the last four to date. The problem may be perhaps stated thus: can the guinea-pig change its spots?

I noted all the terms used to describe the Government and the insurgent forces, omitting quotations from other sources, and restricting myself to terms used descriptively. I then classified these into three categories—"more favourable," "neutral" and "less favourable." For the insurgents, I have included under "less favourable," any terms implying illegal rising against duly constituted authority, i.e., *Revolt, Rebellion, Mutiny, Enemy, Subversive;* as "neutral," terms of merely factual import, viz.: *Rising, Insurrection, Revolution;* as "more favourable," all terms implying that they were a legitimate party, engaged in a straightforward struggle, and not a rebel faction, viz.: *Opposition, "Rebel," anti-Government, Provisional Government, Right, Monarchist, Fascist, Militarist.*

Conversely, I have classified as less favourable to the Government side all terms implying that it was only a faction or a party, not the sole constituted authority, viz.: *Left, Republican, Madrid Government, Communist, Proletarian, Revolutionary, anti-Fascist.* As neutral I have taken *Government* (including *Spanish Government*): and as more favourable, *Loyal* and *Spanish.* In all cases, of course, the corresponding adjectives of the nouns mentioned have been included.

When the totals were taken, the following result appeared:

	Insurgents.			Government.		
	More favourable.	Neutral.	Less favourable.	More favourable.	Neutral.	Less favourable.
Totals, first 4 days ..	0	40	85	23	25	8
Totals, last 4 days ..	38	13	39	6	51	25
Leader, 21/7/36	0	0	10	2	1	0
Leader 29/7/36	8	1	0	0	8	3

The lower half of the table refers to the descriptive terms used in the two leading articles on the insurrection which appeared in the two periods.

Doubtless others would classify the terms somewhat differently, and might have excluded some from the descriptive category; but there is no escaping the general conclusion that the descriptive terminology has changed, and changed in a way which sets the insurgents in a better, and the constituted authority in a worse, light.

The leader of July 29th opens with the phrase, "The Spanish civil war—for it far exceeds the dimensions of a local revolt . . ." so that the change in description (though it had begun by the 27th), presumably is in part a reflection of this altered attitude. However, by what process the change has been brought about, whether conscious or subconscious, is a matter not susceptible to objective analysis. But I submit that the quantitative results have a certain sociological interest. JULIAN S. HUXLEY.

FOREIGN POLICY AND WAR RESISTANCE

SIR,—Mr. Keynes asks certain questions with reference to your admirable leader of July 11th.

May I ask Mr. Keynes certain questions—not with a desire to score debating points, but because this business of peace and war is "Public Issue No. 1," on which it is really imperative to think clearly and to get down to fundamentals? There are few men living who can equal the lucidity and courage of Mr. Keynes' mind. His replies would therefore be of peculiar value in this great debate. These are my questions to Mr. Keynes:

(1) Do you agree with Sir Thomas Inskip's recent dictum that defence has nothing to do with foreign policy? If not, do you think it is reasonable for the Opposition to demand certain guarantees as regards the Government's foreign policy before agreeing to vote for the Government's arms estimates?

(2) Do you agree that the Government were returned to power largely because they promised to uphold the Covenant in the Italo-Abyssinian war, and that they have broken that promise and defaulted on our treaty obligations? If so, do you think it is reasonable that the Opposition should refuse to accept verbal assurances as adequate guarantees from the Government, and should instead demand acts (such as, e.g., those suggested in "Covenanter's" pamphlet, *Labour and War-Resistance*, namely, the conclusion of an all-European arbitration, non-aggression, and mutual assistance treaty, to come into force when accepted by France, the U.S.S.R., this country and any five other European members of the League, Italy being excluded until she gets out of Abyssinia; the passing of a Bill nationalising the munitions industry; a Peace Act of Parliament)?

(3) Do you agree that the Government's abandonment of the

collective system automatically wipes out any distinction between self-defence and the use of war as an instrument of national policy, and makes another great war inevitable sooner or later? If so, do you think it is reasonable that those who would be called upon to pay for the Government's betrayal of the collective system in anguish and death for themselves and their children should warn the Government now, while peace could still be saved by a timely reversal of British foreign policy, that they have a conscientious objection to fighting in any "private" war, i.e., a war of national policy, and will fight only in a "public" or collective system war; therefore, unless and until the Government gives guarantees in acts that it will pursue a genuine collective system policy it must know that believers in the League of Nations will refuse to fight, or work, or pay taxes for it in the event of war?

(4) Do you believe in the doctrine "my country, right or wrong," in the sense of believing that it is everyone's duty to fight in any war in which the British Government alleges self-defence? If not, do you think it is reasonable to say that, since the Government were elected, not with a blank cheque on the issue of war, but in return for explicit pledges to abide by the collective system, and since they have broken those pledges they have forfeited the right to support in case of war, and must either resign—thus giving the electorate a chance to pass judgment on their breach of faith—or else give guarantees satisfactory to the Opposition of loyalty to the collective system?

I do not believe in refusal to fight in any and every war as the way to peace. I am not a pacifist. I am a collective systemite. But the chief reason the National Government have let the collective system go by default is because they have all along assumed that the British people would fight in any war into which their foreign policy (or lack of a foreign policy) landed us. And I see no way of arresting their Rake's Progress to Armageddon short of a nation-wide refusal to fight, or to work, or to pay taxes in case of war, unless and until the Government give adequate guarantees as to the nature of their foreign policy. Does Mr. Keynes know of a better 'ole?

A SOCIALIST

SIR,—In your leader on the Spanish civil war you write: "The battalions stand formed—the French and the Russians on one side, the Italians and Germans on the other. But one enigma persists. This country of ours straddles the trenches and fails to recognise the nature of the struggle that has begun."

In other words, if and when the issue is joined, there will be three possibilities: (1) that we shall assist the brigand powers, (2) that we shall assist those who are suffering aggression, or (3) that we shall stand aloof. When you were arguing two or three weeks ago in favour of keeping this country as weak as possible, I inferred that the explanation must be found in your supposing the first alternative decidedly the most probable. Have I understood you correctly?

If I have, I suggest again that this would be an extreme error of judgment. It may be that we shall stand aloof; it may indeed be desirable that we should stand aloof; but, if by the aggression of the dictatorships the struggle comes, surely it would be insane to believe that Mr. Baldwin's government, or any other government likely to be in power in this country, will weigh in on the side of the aggressors?

If, however, the doubt in your mind is merely between the second and third alternatives, then I ask again why do you wish this country to be as weak as possible? In common with many others, I do not myself know my own mind between the second and the third alternative. I doubt if it is wise, as yet, to reach a firm conclusion. But I am absolutely clear that the more formidable this country stands, the less likely is the feared contingency to come to pass.

One further point. Your most recent leader suggests that, in your mind, a war between the democracies and the dictatorships is absolutely certain. And you complain against Mr. Baldwin's government for not aligning itself definitely against the dictatorships. But Mr. Baldwin is perhaps wiser than you are. He may be hesitating because he knows that *nothing* is certain. It may conceivably prove to have been right on our part not to clinch the position; not to crystallise the fatal alignment of forces. The best, the only, hope of peace lies in a policy which does not regard war as certain; which breaks down no bridges and makes no final commitments. Herr Hitler, however disagreeable a creature, is a queer one. National hysterias do not last for ever. Something totally unexpected may suddenly change the whole situation. Your leader on the Spanish civil war enforced on your readers considerations which it is important that they should understand. It was a valuable and interesting statement. But we should combine an awareness of these tendencies and possibilities with a refusal to allow our minds or our decisions to crystallise. It is a nerve-racking thing to pay close and continuous attention to a matter of vast importance, and, at the same time, to refrain from forming any conclusions. No state of mind is more painful than a state of continuing doubt. But the ability to maintain it may be a mark of statesmanship. If I am right in attributing it to Mr. Baldwin, he may be serving by his indecisions the best interests of peace.

But one conclusion does seem to be clear. It is better to have strong forces and no clear-cut foreign policy than to advocate no armaments one week and warlike alliances the next.

J. M. KEYNES

[The letter from a Socialist supplies the answer to Mr. Keynes on a number of points. We should add: (1) Mr. Keynes thinks in purely national terms. When he speaks of "keeping this country as weak as possible," he is thinking of the country as a unit. We are unable to do so. To put arms at the disposal of Lord Hailsham or Lord Rothermere (to take an extreme case) would be obviously as dangerous—indeed, it would be the same thing—as to increase the arms of Germany. Whether arms are desirable or not depends on who controls them. If the army is a popular army, prepared to stand by the common people, it is a security for the common people; if, as at present in this country, the Air Force is entirely recruited by potentially Fascist bombers, why in heaven's name should Mr. Keynes want to increase their number? (2) Mr. Keynes says "if and when the issue is joined." Well, it is already joined. It was joined when we dithered instead of stopping Mussolini. It is joined now when the help and sympathy of the ruling class in this country are put at the disposal of the Fascist rebels in Spain. Here again Mr. Keynes' analysis seems inadequate. There are not two separate conditions—peace and war. The struggle goes on all the time. The British Government is not now asked to fight, but if it wants support for arms from people who intend never again to fight for nationalist or imperialist causes, is it unreasonable to demand that its foreign policy should be one that they approve, and that British *influence* should now, in the heat of the present conflict, be used against, instead of for, Fascism? We agree with Mr. Keynes that the future is entirely obscure; which side British capitalism will eventually come down upon we do not know. Mr. Baldwin has, we are sure, the best intentions in the world, but the actual effect of British policy during his administration has been greatly to strengthen Fascism on the Continent, and we see no reason to think that the tendency will be less marked if we all co-operate with the National Government in preparing for war. Mr. Keynes' final remark exactly misses the point. If we are to have alliances we must have arms; if we are to sit by and watch the triumph of aggression then we see no reason for vast armaments.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

BATS IN THE BELFRY?

SIR,—Like you, I am all in favour of the liberty of the press, but when one is quoting or paraphrasing the opinions of other papers there is really no need to lie about them.

When you say in your issue of July 25th: "At the time of the trial of the engineers in Moscow, the Editor (of *The Aeroplane*) said that the R.A.F. was all waiting for orders to bomb Leningrad and almost every week he repeated the same ambition in some form," you are misrepresenting facts to an extent which amounts to a deliberate lie.

You go on to say: "No cause of quarrel with Russia seems necessary: *The Aeroplane* just wants us to bomb the Bolshies. It is a very odd phenomenon at a time when on the surface at least British and Russian interests seem identical."

I cannot spare time to look up the exact wording that I used at the time of the trial of the engineers in Moscow, but I certainly did not say that the R.A.F. was all waiting for orders to bomb Leningrad. What I probably said was that if the necessity arose the R.A.F. were quite ready to bomb any part of Russia. I hardly think I used the name Leningrad, because I habitually use the proper name of that city, Petersburg—as it was built by Peter the Great, and not by the renegade Lenin.

To say that *The Aeroplane* wants us to bomb the Bolshies is equally a lie. I have no desire for the R.A.F. to bomb anybody so long as other people leave us alone. But knowing something of the history of the Mongolian peoples and recognising that periodically they throw up leaders whose one desire seems to be Westward conquest, I recognise the fact, as any sane person would, that we must be prepared to collaborate with Germany and Italy and any other civilised nation which cares to join in with us in keeping Oriental barbarism out of Europe.

The present rulers of Russia may be confirmed Pacifists for all I know. But the fact remains that they have built up the biggest

army and the biggest air force in the world and that their fighting men are the most brainless and obedient cannon-fodder in the world. All that is needed is that a successor of Attila or Genghis Khan or Tamerlane should arise, and he will find ready to hand a bigger and more dangerous Mongolian horde than has ever invaded Europe. And that is what we have got to be ready to meet.

175 Piccadilly, C. G. GREY,
London, W.1. Editor, *The Aeroplane*

[Since Mr. Grey is too busy to consult his own files, we have done so for him. The passage in question appeared in *The Aeroplane* on April 26th, 1933, in an article on the Metro-Vic Trial at Moscow:

> But the good solid argument of force still exists, and if we as a nation do not agree with the Russian verdict, and if we think that £20,000,000 worth of damage should be done to Russia (which is the amount estimated as the damage to be done by the embargo on trade) then the obviously sensible thing to do is to send a couple of aircraft carriers into the Baltic and bomb to bits the forts of Kronstadt, and the fortresses and factories round St. Petersburg—now called Leningrad. . . . And the Air Force would be quite glad to do the job, because it would provide them with some useful bombing practice and possibly a little air fighting, and a pleasing change of air and scenery. Also the Naval anti-aircraft gunners on the carriers would welcome the chance of some real practice at live targets.

Mr. Grey's subsequent remarks suggest that he is beyond argument. The most "Mongol" peoples in Europe are the Finns and the Hungarians, though it is true that there is a substantial Mongolian admixture in the "Aryan" blood of the Prussians with whom Mr. Grey wishes to ally this country. We asked how British interests now clashed with Russian. Mr. Grey refers us to the conquests of Genghis Khan and Tamerlane. We are satisfied to leave it at that with the passing remark that if one is looking for ceaseless historical urges to conquer, none of Mr. Grey's mediaeval scourges can hope to compete with the western white races which have expanded, at their own volition, during the last three centuries over most of the habitable globe.—ED., *N.S. & N.*]

SIR,—The cheap gibe may win praise from the sycophant, but not from the Services, and the Editor of *The Aeroplane* has little or no following in the Royal Air Force.

Aviation and international politics are inter-related but ignorance born of egotism is no excuse for the deliberate exacerbation of international relationships.

The glorification of war—actual or inferred—is the pursuit of the ignorant and brings its reward—the contempt of those who did experience its miseries. ROYAL AIR FORCE

"TOWARDS A NEW LEAGUE"

SIR,—May I express my appreciation for the latest and greatest of your publications? No one from palest Pink to deepest Red can but imagine that here at last is a workable proposition which must find an echo in all our minds.

My purpose in writing you is to make the suggestion that all readers of the NEW STATESMAN AND NATION should buy as many copies of *Towards a New League* as they feel able to afford, and distribute these amongst their friends and acquaintances asking them to do the same—if sufficiently interested. Only thus will the widest possible publicity be assured for this masterly analysis of the chaos we call Europe.

The sands are running out, and still the air seems congested with petty quibbles and doctrinaire bickerings between those parties and groups of the Left and near Left to which most of us belong. Cannot all this be dropped in favour of a general participation in a Popular Front, a participation which will represent but a beginning in the real struggle against war and Fascism?

6 Sandy Hill Road, L. C. IRVINE
Wallington, Surrey.

SOUTH WALES

SIR,—For thirteen years I have ministered to a small congregation in South Wales, 90 per cent. of which have been unemployed for more than half that period. "Critic's" comments in a London Diary deserve to be underlined, and brought to the attention of as many people as possible.

On the other hand, the same comments require analysis. The bulk of the population is still solidly "Labour," but distrustful of the official party, and "fed up" with most groups appealing for its support. Here the National position is reversed. We see no alternative to "Labour," though we feel it is past praying for. The divisions in the ranks of forward-looking people can always be counted upon by their opponents. To the Means Test, for a few days, a United Front. On a score of other questions hopeless disagreement. Much of it is as personal as it is political, and the feathering of one's family nest makes the average voter sick. That "everybody does it" is no excuse, for Socialism is no "grab-all" politics. Communism has no deep intellectual hold, though individual Communists have strong followings, because of their honesty, and their readiness to pay the price of going straight. (Horner, for example.)

Fascism will not touch the post-forty generation, but among the younger unemployed, who have never worked, and who are unorganised, except in the Social Service clubs which have sprung up everywhere, the possibilities are sinister. The W.E.A., the clubs, and the churches all teach and practise a measure of democracy. All are missing the 18 to 25 group, with rare exceptions. A coloured shirt and five shillings a week more might produce startling results. Fortunately, the National Government doesn't know its own job, and *reduces* the benefits of single men.

Have progressives any more sense? What appeal has a Popular Front for youth? To these questions all who believe in a square deal and in liberty should now address themselves. To-morrow will be too late.

Merthyr Tydfil. M. WATCYN-WILLIAMS

STANDARD OF LIVING IN THE U.S.S.R.

SIR,—It is not surprising that Sir Walter Citrine, as a Trades Union official, should have been impressed by the disparity between the respective standards of living of the Russian and British worker, but G. D. H. Cole, in his review of Sir Walter's book, should, I think, have pressed home the fact that no useful comparison along these lines is practicable. As well, indeed, might one try to draw useful deductions from a comparison between the respective standards of living of Durham and Mayfair. All over the world millions of slaves are toiling to maintain our standard of living at a relatively high level and the fair comparison would therefore be between the standard of the Russian worker and the average standard of the workers of the British Empire. If we take into consideration the poverty, suffering and misery of the Indian peasant, for example, in assessing the latter standard, the Russian worker is already, by comparison, rich beyond the dreams of avarice. This fact is, of course, an obvious one, but Cole and his contemporaries would, I think, do well to press it home on all occasions.

7 Park Rise, Harpenden, Herts. W. H. JAMES

WHAT IS ENGLISH?

SIR,—I rubbed my eyes with astonishment last week on seeing Dr. Adrian Stephen in the shape of Humpty-Dumpty trouncing me, as though I were Alice, for "the absurd mistake of supposing that there is any way in which English ought to be spoken." He is highly indignant that "pontificating boobies" like Mencken or Fowler should tell us that one word is *right* and another *wrong*, since he declares that the study of language is only a branch of natural history, to be studied by scientists and not, as I had supposed, also a matter of elementary education to be taught by schoolmasters so that we shall not say *there's glory* when we mean *a nice knock me down argument*. I would hardly like to say that Humpty-Dumpty was *wrong* whatever he said, but he is mistaken in supposing that I mean *morally wrong* when I use the word *wrong*. It is wrong, for example, by dropping the final t, to use the word *can* for *can't* as well as for *can*, a habit which Mr. Mencken tells us is growing in America, just as it would be wrong to call a spade a fork. That is to say, it is confusing.

Hilton Hall, DAVID GARNETT
St. Ives, Huntingdonshire.

SIR,—The letter from Mr. Adrian Stephen is a more than usually distressing example of a practice which tends to encourage the foreigner in his contemptuous attitude towards our nation because of certain things he finds in England and judges to be national traits. Mr. Stephen admits his entire ignorance of an American author who is known throughout the world, but this ignorance, abundantly shown in his short letter, does not deter him from making dogmatic assertions about a book that he has

not even looked at. *The American Language*, as Mr. Garnett indicated in his delightful essay, is a remarkable achievement and, as Mr. Stephen could discover for himself at the expense of an hour's reading, a most thorough examination of the English of America without any assumptions or assertions as to any "oughts" in the writing or speaking of the common tongue.

Mr. Garnett, as it seems to me, is essentially right in his argument as to the vitality of British English and the ephemeral existence of most colloquial and slang terms; but surely he goes wrong in several of his positive statements? Mr. Mencken, for example, says that America has established "a general *Volkssprache* for the whole nation," and he contrasts this with the "discordant local dialects" of Britain and other lands. To Mr. Garnett this is a "sublime impertinence" on the part of Mr. Mencken; and yet everyone who has travelled over North America knows it to be a statement of fact. Notwithstanding the many regional variations, and the fantastic contributions of European immigrants, the common speech of North America is far more standardised than that of our own small island. The national army of twenty years ago was a revelation as to the persistence of our dialects. The great military camps of the United States provided no similar demonstration of mutual unintelligibility. Again, is Mr. Garnett correct in saying that in a word such as *senile* we have always been Americanised? I should say emphatically not. Here is an instance of conflicting testimony as to everyday speech which, I suggest, should help us towards tolerance of Mr. Mencken when, as often happens, he goes astray in his comments on English usage.

Can Mr. Garnett uphold his view that "the King's English is luckily the language that will prevail?" I do not think so, at any rate as regards the spoken word. Listeners throughout the world have remarked upon the distance travelled in one generation from the English of King George to our so-called standard English, and I should argue that the rapid vowel decay of present-day England, for one thing, must tell against the establishment of the speech of Southern England as the world's second language. The impress of North America is unmistakable in Europe as in Asia. And yet, while expressing my disagreement with Mr. Garnett as to the future of English, I am confronted by this extraordinary fact: that Mr. Mencken has written the whole of his masterly and entertaining book on the divergent speech of Britain and America in straight English of sound academic quality.

Princes Risborough. S. K. RATCLIFFE

THE INSECT PLAY

SIR,—On the eve of withdrawing her People's National Theatre production of the Kapek Brothers' *Insect Play* from the Little Theatre for lack of sufficient public support, Miss Nancy Price, out of her own belief in the importance of the play, and encouraged by the gallant and self-sacrificing support of her cast, bravely decided to keep it on for another fortnight. By the time this appears in print it will have another week to run, when it must positively be withdrawn unless by then public support is such as to make it possible to extend the run.

It is, of course, preposterous that a National theatre should have to depend on private enterprise; it should obviously be State subsidised. But the Government, as we know, has other things to spend the country's money on—such things as armaments for the extermination of men, women and children, in the interests of "national defence," "for a piece of land between two blades of grass," and "for the protection of our commercial interests"—like the ants in *The Insect Play*.

(This play so well satirises Mussolini's recent war that it is difficult to realise that it was written fifteen years ago.)

The Insect Play is the only play in London calculated to make people think concerning the most vital issue of the day—the criminal insanity of war, the danger of the increasing war-mentality. If this play fails for lack of public support it will be a bitter indictment of public stupidity and lack of imagination. Such a public will deserve what the mad world is heading for. The moral implicit in the ant-scene of *The Insect Play* is more important than ever to-day. It is a thousand pities that the play cannot be subsidised and sent on tour all over the country, and that older school-children cannot be sent to it as the most important part of their education. What the anti-war movement needs to-day, of course—and needs urgently—is a Lady Houston of the Left!

Oak Cottage, Burghley Road, Wimbledon Common, S.W.19. ETHEL MANNIN

THE CIVIL WAR IN SPAIN

SIR,—The outbreak of civil war in Spain has led to the cancellation of the University of Liverpool Summer School of Spanish which is held each year in San Sebastian, and of a number of other vacation courses to meet the needs of the many students and teachers who were going out to study in Spain this summer. We have arranged for a short intensive course in Spanish language and literature to be held here early in September.

In view of the exceptional circumstances, and as it is impossible to reach universities and schools during the Long Vacation, I should be extremely grateful if you could give publicity to this announcement.

The University, Liverpool. E. ALLISON PEERS, Professor of Spanish

GAS MASKS

SIR,—As no one has replied to my letter of July 25th on the subject of the "100 per cent. efficient" gas-mask, may I add a footnote to it? The authority previously quoted was reported as saying, later in the B.M.A. meeting that, "I was referring to a new type of mask, the existence of which is known to very few. It is a general service gas-mask for issue not to the public, but to soldiers on active service." So the civilian population is *not* to be protected against those types of gas which will be used against it in any future war. I am writing on August 4th.

Parrott's, Wootton By Woodstock, Oxford. E. M. HUGH-JONES

Miscellany

"PRIMITIVES"

WHEN discriminating racially, popular opinion lays emphasis on the Negro's colour. Science, however, goes deeper than that and bases its arguments on the workings of the Negro mind.

Man, say certain of the scientists, is divided into two varieties—the variety which thinks in concrete symbols, and the variety which thinks in abstract concepts. The Negro belongs to the former and Western man to the latter.

Now the man who thinks in concrete symbols has no abstract conception of such words as "good," "brave," "clever." They are represented in his mind by symbolic pictures. For instance, "good" in a concrete mind is often represented as a picture of a woman with a child. The drawing of this picture would be the way of conveying an idea of goodness to a person of the same mentality. Such pictures become conventionalised into a kind of written language. Now to the Western mind this may seem a clumsy way of going about things, but it is a method which has given the world some of the most delicate and richest art, and some of the profoundest and most subtle philosophy that man has ever known.

For it is not only the African Negro, and so-called primitive people, who think in concrete symbols—all the great civilisations of the East (with possibly the exception of India) have been built up by people with this type of mind. It is a mentality that has given us giants like Confucius, Mencius, and Lao-tze. More than likely it was this kind of thinking that gave us the understanding and wisdom of a person like Jesus Christ.

It has given us the wonders of Central American architecture and Chinese art.

It has, in fact, given us the full flower of all the highest possibilities in man—with the single exception of applied science. That was left to a section of Western man to achieve and on that he bases his assertion of superiority.

Now I am not going to try to belittle the achievements of science. Only a fool would deny that the man who holds the secrets of those holds the key position in the world. I am simply going to ask—having found the key, has Western man—Western bourgeois man (the reason for the distinction

is made clear later)—sufficient strength left to turn it in the lock? Or is he going to find that in the search he has so exhausted his vitality that he will have to call in the co-operation of his more virile "inferiors"—Eastern or Western—before he can open the door and enter into his heritage?

For the cost of developing the kind of mind by which the discoveries of science were made has been one which now threatens the discoverer's very life.

The reason for this lies in the fact that Western man only seems to have gained more and more power of abstraction at the expense of his creative faculties. There is not much doubt that the artistic achievements of Europe, as abstract intellectualism penetrated deeper and deeper into the people, have steadily declined. It is true that this decline is partly obscured by an output of self-conscious, uninspired productions, which have a certain artificial grace; but discriminating people have little difficulty in distinguishing these lifeless imitations from the living pulsing thing.

It may be argued that preference for live art over dead imitation may be simply a question of taste and is of no fundamental importance. Neither would it be if the change was something confined to that small minority usually described as artists, but unfortunately what shows amongst these is only a symptom of a sickness that to some extent is affecting almost every stratum of the Western world.

To understand this you need to remember that by "creative ability" one means something more than the capacity of a few individuals to paint, to write, or to make music. That is simply the supreme development of a quality that exists in the make-up of every human being. The whole problem of living can never be understood until the world recognises that artists are not a race apart. Every man has some element of the artist in him, and if this is pulled up by the roots he becomes suicidal and dies.

In the East this quality has never been damaged—to that is traceable the virility of most Eastern peoples. In the West it remains healthy and active only amongst those sections of the community which have never fully subscribed to Western values—that is, the exploited sections, plus some rebels from the bourgeoisie. For the rest, mathematical thinking has made them so intellectualised, so detached and self-conscious that it has tended to kill this creative emotional side. The result is, that as Western civilisation advances its members find themselves in the paradoxical position of being more and more in control of their environment, yet more and more at the mercy of it. The man who accepts Western values absolutely, finds his creative faculties becoming so warped and stunted that he is almost completely dependent on external satisfactions; and the moment he becomes frustrated in his search for these, he begins to develop neurotic symptoms, to feel that life is not worth living, and, in chronic cases, to take his own life.

This is a severe price to pay even for such achievements as those of Western science. That the price has not been complete, and its originators have so far survived, is due to the stubborn persistence, in spite of discouragement, of the creative side. Though European thought, in its blind worship of the intellect, has tried to reduce life to a mechanical formula, it has never quite succeeded. Its entire peasantry, large masses of its proletariat, and even a certain percentage of its middle class have never been really touched. These sections have thrown up a series of rebels who have felt rather than analysed the danger and cried out loudly against it.

Many of these have probably been obscure people who have never been heard of outside their immediate circle, but others have been sufficiently articulate to rise above the shoulders of their fellows and voice their protest in forms that have commanded world-wide attention. Of such persons one can mention Blake and D. H. Lawrence. In fact one could say that all the live art which Europe has produced since the Renaissance has been in spite of, and not because of, the new trends of Western thought.

I do not stand alone in this criticism of the Western intellect. Famous critics support me. Walter Raleigh, when discussing Blake, writes:

> The gifts with which he is so plentifully dowered for all they are looked at askance as abnormal and portentous, are the common stuff of human nature, without which life would flag and cease. No man destitute of genius could live for a day. Genius is spontaneity—the life of the soul asserting itself triumphantly in the midst of dead things.

In the face of all this can anyone echo the once-common cry that the way of progress is the way of the intellectual? If we all took this turning should we not be freeing ourselves from our earthy origins by the too-simple expedient of pulling ourselves up by the roots?

But because one does not want to follow Western thought into this dilemna, one none the less recognises the value of its achievements. One would not have the world discount them and retrogress in terror to a primitive state. It is simply that one recoils from the Western intellectual's idea that, having got himself on to this peak overhanging an abyss, he should want to drag all other people—on pain of being dubbed inferior if they refuse—up after him into the same precarious position.

That, in a sentence, is my case against Western values.

It is not a matter of whether the Negro and other so-called "primitive" people are incapable of becoming pure intellectuals (actually, in America, many have), it is a matter of whether they are going to be unwise enough to be led down this dangerous by-way when, without sacrificing the sound base in which they have their roots, they can avail themselves of the now-materialised triumphs of science and proceed to use them while retaining the vital creative side.

One does not go so far as to say that the West will not share in this new progress. Perhaps, even yet, it will find a way to turn the key. Perhaps the recognised fact that over-intellectualism tends towards impotence and sterility will result in the natural extinction of that flower of the West that has given us our scientific achievements, and to the rise of the more virile, better-balanced European, till now derided and submerged. Some people think that in the European proletariat this new Western man is already coming to birth.

It is some such solution as this which I imagine will solve the problem of the further progress of the world.

We, however, who are not Europeans, may be forgiven for hoping that the new age will be one in which the teeming "inferiors" of the East will be permitted to share.

Naturally one does not claim that the Negro must come to the front more than another. One does, however, realise that in the Negro one has a virile people of many millions, overwhelmingly outnumbering the other inhabitants of a rich and undeveloped continent.

That, when he is given a chance, he is capable of holding his own with the best Western Europe can produce is proved by the quality of his folk music both in Africa and the Americas—also by the works of Pushkin, the Russo-African poet; or by the performances of Ira Aldrich—the actor who enslaved artistic Europe in the last century. Even a writer like Dumas, though not in the first rank, is a person who could hardly have been fathered by a member of an inferior race.

To-day there are in existence more Negroes of the first rank than the world cares to recognise.

In reply, it will of course be argued that these are isolated instances—that the negroes as a whole have never achieved anything. "It may be true," people will say, "that the African thinks as Confucius thought, or as the Aztecs thought; that his language is constructed in the same way as that language which gave us the wonder of Chinese poetry; that he works along the same lines as the Chinese artist; but where are his philosophers, his poets, his artists?"

Even if this were unanswerable, it would not prove that—since he has the right equipment—the African's golden age might not lie ahead. It is not unanswerable, however. Africa has produced far more than Western people realise. More than one scientist has been struck by the similarity between certain works by long-dead West African artists and exquisite examples of Chinese, Mexican and Javanese art.

Leading European sculptors have found inspiration in the work of the West African.

It is now recognised that African music has subtleties of rhythm far finer than anything achieved by a Western composer. In fact the more complicated Negro rhythms cannot be rendered on Western instruments at all.

Such achievements can hardly be the work of a fundamentally inferior people. When the African realises this and builds on his own traditions, borrowing mainly the Westerner's technology (a technology—he should note—that is being shown not to function except in a socialist framework) he may develop into a people regarding whom the adjective " inferior " would be ludicrous rather than appropriate.

PAUL ROBESON

POEM

I REMEMBER certain delicate fingers
Not known to my touch : another's eyes
Neutral under my closest scrutinies :
Voices in rooms, voices over wires,
Answering unseen questioner and seen.
I have passed hunters in pairs, flaunting corner-boys
And painted pirates of the night, smiling
Indifferent invitation to their bodies' hiring :
A beggar whose horribly visible bones
Marked him for death soon, matches in shivering hand.
Faces in railway compartments, faces in streets
Have looked, unknown desires hidden in hostile eyes,
With the instinctive mistrust of intimacy with strangers.
Only long journeys break their reserve : they talk,
Knowing they will lose you in the tumult of arrival,
Without interchange of names or other meeting.

These like the wave breaking I have touched,
And in the backwash picked some richness out,
Drawn to the heart's flood—and ebbing left
A sign upon strange sands.

KENNETH GEE

PLAYS AND PICTURES

The Perranporth Players

Those who are spending their holiday in Cornwall can very well give themselves the pleasure of an evening with this charming company. Perranporth is 9 miles from Truro and the same from Newquay, and you can spend your late afternoon in the best surf-bathing on the North Coast, dine in the little town and go on to your play with a certainty of enjoying yourself. None of the players is more than thirty, all have been well-grounded in repertory, and there is an air of enjoyment about the whole thing, which fully compensates for any rough corners or the constraint of their handkerchief of a stage. And they do wonders with their 12×6 platform, particularly Mr. Roger Furse, their scenic designer. Mr. Furse knows his job, has a very personal talent and a charming sense of colour. His bistre and white set for *Springtime for Henry* has style, wit and elegance and shows what can be done with soap-boxes and canvas ; here is someone the commercial theatre in London should certainly employ. Their repertory is ambitious ; but that is only as it should be. What is important is that here is a group of boys and girls, all keen on their job, spending their summer holiday in practising it for the sake of their bread and butter and getting people out of the cinema to see them do it. If they sometimes bite off a bit more than they can chew, who cares ? They never give the desperately dull competent performances that bore one so often in London, and most of their faults lie in the fact that they all produce each other ; what they need to polish their corners is someone with authority to crack the whip. There have been a number of good individual performances. Mr. Frith Banbury has already mastered his technique enough to carry off unsuitable parts and, as the weak member of the Leopold and Loeb partnership in *Rope*, gave a first-rate performance ; Mr. Richard Ainley shows a charming personality in modern parts, and deserves a trial in something different to the costume roles he has been allotted in London. Miss Pauline Letts, who has been with the Coventry repertory for the past year, is a delightful actress with unusual looks of the Margaret Sullavan type and a lovely speaking voice ; Mr. Robert Morley, author of *Short Story*, proves himself an accomplished comedian. But the success of the company is not due to any one member, but to the fact that they each have a very distinct quality, which contributes to giving the performances something the theatre often lacks, spontaneity. Anyone who remembers, for instance, *Troilus and Cressida* some years back at Cambridge will know what this elusive charm means to a production. If Mr. Peter Ball, who is responsible for the venture, was responsible also for selecting his company, then let us hope he will one day exercise his talent for choosing in a larger sphere. An enterprise like this may well lead one day to a summer theatre on American lines. The coastboard of Maine has often produced a New York winner ; Cornwall, Devon or Norfolk could do the same for London.

" Under Two Flags," at the Tivoli.

The ingredients of a Foreign Legion film are now standardised. *Under Two Flags* has followed the formula with the help of four stars and the director of *Cavalcade* and *Mutiny on the Bounty*. Against a background of desert fighting, last-minute escapes and rescues, we have the heart entanglements of a tough but sentimental officer (Victor McLaglen), a cultured English gentleman with an unknown past (Ronald Colman), the Legion coquette (Claudette Colbert) and an English lady of noble birth and frozen exterior (Rosalind Russell). If you can accept this sort of fare there is plenty to enjoy : Victor McLaglen is always worth watching and an uninspiring part gives him one moment in this film, with a particularly difficult decision to make, when he can use all his talent in a fine piece of acting. Ronald Colman and Claudette Colbert are polished as usual and Rosalind Russell is very much the restrained English lady. How she could have captured Colman's heart when Claudette Colbert was around only an English gentleman could tell ; old school tie will out, even when hidden under a Legionnaire's uniform. And Claudette Colbert's heroic death after leading Chasseurs to the rescue of a surrounded fort will make strong men blow their noses. Despite the familiar story the film has plenty of humour and excitement. Herbert Mundin, as a cockney, deserves mention ; he is one of those small-part character actors who never let you down. Frank Lloyd's direction and the handling of the scenes of fighting, done on a big scale, succeed in keeping interest alive through most of 9,990 feet although the film might very well have been a lot shorter. But plenty of money was spent on the production and the directors don't want you to forget it. Ouida-fans will not find their favourite flavour here.

" Seven Sinners," at the New Gallery.

To date, the average English film has been far below the average American in technique, story and acting. Our claims have been based on a few big productions heralded by special ballyhoo. *Seven Sinners* is an English film remarkable in that it has no cluster of stars, no midnight preview, no big press campaign, but is a competent, sparkling, fast-moving, well directed and well acted film. The story deals with a train-wrecking criminal whose identity is kept secret till the last reel ; the director is Albert de Courville and the stars Edmund Lowe and Constance Cummings. No single aspect of the film stands out, but every element, from direction to decor, fits in its place without dislodging its neighbour. There is one really memorable sequence : in searching for a suspected person Edmund Lowe and Constance Cummings attend a village whist-drive ; the acting of all the players concerned combines with the direction in as true a study as anything the screen has given us, culminating in a glorious moment when a spinster becomes hysterical as Lowe trumps her ace and deprives her of a sucking pig. *Seven Sinners* makes no film history, but is worth seeing.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, August 7th—
" Chinese White," Daly's Theatre.

MONDAY, August 10th—
" The Private Life of Henry VIII," Everyman Cinema.
" The Vengeance," Barn Theatre, Shere, Surrey.
" Zero," Embassy Theatre.
" As You Like It," Regent's Park.

WEDNESDAY, August 12th—
" The Ante-Room," Queen's Theatre.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

ONLY a few human beings are content to face the universe naked like the earthworm. Most prefer some defensive structure and Faith, by all accounts, furnishes them with a sort of crystal shell, in which they can curl up and take refuge when things go badly. Some men, like snails, have the happy faculty of secreting their own Faith, which they enlarge imperceptibly as they grow, but such men are almost as uncommon as those of the earthworm type. Others, like caddis worms, construct shelters of miscellaneous materials that they find lying about. Both snail and caddis, however, are happier than the poor hermit-crab, who has to find an existing shell to suit him, squeezes himself in with difficulty, grows corns on his tail and goes through agonies of anxiety during the moult, when he has to abandon his old Faith and find another big enough to house him. The snails, of course, always keep to their old conservative ways, just as the worms always wriggle their way out of any shell you put them in, but the majority of the caddis and hermits vary in their behaviour according to their environment. During the nineteenth century there was a strong tendency to adopt lighter shells, which while furnishing some protection, interfered less with daily life. The caddis clutched at straws to make his envelope instead of granite chips from the Rock of Ages, and the hermit crabs could be seen abandoning their traditional whelk-shells and creeping into all sorts and sizes of hollow objects, such as empty matchboxes, pickle-jars, finger-stalls, or worse, thus furnishing a pathetic spectacle which excited ribald amusement in the worms. During the first quarter of this century, there seemed to be an increase in the worm population, while large numbers of caddis and hermit crabs were going about exiguously clothed. A reaction against this nudism has set in, and the greater part of Europe has adopted the shield of Faith as part of a general rearmament. Moreover, the empiric scepticism of the worm is by its nature not transmissible, and young hermit crabs in England show a growing inclination to creep into empty cornucopias imported from abroad.

* * *

While some of them will enjoy the ecstasies of Faith, many will undergo the "growing pains" of the hermit crab who feels himself a misfit. These sufferings are the subject of *The Autobiography of Mark Rutherford* and of *Mark Rutherford's Deliverance*; indeed they form the background of all "Mark Rutherford's" works, a reprint of which, edited by his son, Sir William Hale White, is now being brought out (Oxford, 3*s*. 6*d*. a volume). Just as Ernest Pontifex was not Samuel Butler, Rutherford was not identical with Hale White, but the *Autobiography* and the *Deliverance* are as accurate a picture of the author's spiritual experience as *The Way Of All Flesh* is of Butler's. Rutherford, escaping from the narrower prison of Calvinistic Nonconformity, never became an empiric sceptic, and no sooner had escaped than he began constructing a new shelter for himself. The result leads to some curious contradictions. Rutherford obviously believed that his message was that:

> One-fourth of Life is intelligible, the other three-fourths is unintelligible darkness; and our earliest duty is to cultivate the habit of not looking round the corner.

The message thus stated in the introduction is twice repeated:

> Oh, how absurd is man! The greatest part, far the greatest part of our lives, is spent in dreaming over the morrow, and when it comes, it, too, is consumed in the anticipation of a brighter morrow, and so the cheat is prolonged, even to the grave.

Yet in spite of this repeated injunction to live for the day only, all Mark Rutherford's values depend on sacrificing the present for the future. The most unhappy period in his life was when he was the nonconformist minister in a small country town where, however he poured himself out, he "was unable to kindle a soul by any word he uttered, no matter with what earnestness it might be charged." After a few months of nightmarish solitude, he fell into a state of hypochrondriacal depression, with occasional fits of hysteria, and was then recommended to drink wine by his doctor. Half a bottle of claret a day made him a new man but—though he never even got drunk—he became terrified that he was "the slave of alcohol," his claret seemed "sensual and base" and he gave it up after a terrific struggle.

> I understood enough to be convinced that the man who has once rescued himself from the domination even of half a bottle, or three-parts of a bottle of claret daily, may assure himself that there is nothing more in life to be done which he need dread.

* * *

He showed himself equally puritanical in regard to sex. Thus he congratulates himself unreservedly upon his "purity" as a young man, without dreaming that his lifelong purity may have contributed to his hysteria, and he takes for granted that any attempt to put "ideal theories of the relationship of man and woman" into practice would be "going wrong" and that any loosening of the marital tie is "iniquity." To Mark Rutherford the "priceless value" of Christianity was not that it was a religion of love but that it dwelt

> with profound earnestness on the bisection of man—on the distinction within him, vital to the last degree, between the higher and the lower, heaven and hell. . . . The shallowest of mortals is able now to laugh at the notion of a personal devil. No doubt there is no such thing existent; but the horror at evil which could find no other expression than the creation of a devil is no subject for laughter, and if it do not in some shape or other survive, the race itself will not survive.

There is obviously no great "deviation" here from the path marked out by his fellow townsman two centuries before in *Pilgrim's Progress*. Rutherford lost his faith, and came to believe that the idea of personal immortality is positively evil, but there was no emancipation from the ancestral calvinism that can be compared with the emancipation of Butler, and the reason is no doubt partly that Mark Rutherford was deficient in savage humour. He could not mock a serious subject, and mockery is the *aqua regia* which makes the whelk shells fizz. He would not have seen the relevance of the musical banks in Erewhon. Yet in one respect Mark Rutherford is curiously unlike his contemporaries: he regards religion from a pragmatical, utilitarian point of view and hardly ever bothers himself as to whether its doctrines are *true*. Thus the Catholic faith "is nothing less than a divine casket of precious remedies, and if it is to be brutally broken, it will take ages to rediscover and restore them." The same pragmatical streak can be discerned in the deacon who

> professed to be sure that nobody who had not been converted would escape the fire—and the wine-merchant certainly had not been converted—but was very far from admitting to himself that the wine-merchant ought to be converted, or that it would be proper to try to convert him.

And also in the Bedford prayer-meetings that enjoyed walking home with certain young women more than hearing the

> travelling draper who never prayed without telling all of us that his soul was a mass of putrefying sores, but everybody thought the better of him for his self-humiliation. One actual indiscretion, however, brought home to him would have been visited by suspension or expulsion.

Mark Rutherford was aware that he had been shipwrecked, like Crusoe, and I have dwelt almost exclusively with the remarkable amount of salvage he was able to get ashore. But the beauty and interest of these books is rather in the sincerity with which he describes the *via dolorosa* which he was doomed to tread, when cast up, penniless, in London. He was as sensitive as he was solitary and his abnormal awareness of unhappiness is most attractive. Those who are about to creep into the convolutions of an existing faith will find in him a warning that it is possible to lose its consolations without being able to cast off its shackles.

DAVID GARNETT

NEW NOVELS

Homage to Blenholt. By DANIEL FUCHS. *Constable.* 7s. 6d.
Frightened Angels. By JOANNA CANNAN. *Gollancz.* 7s. 6d.
The White Hare. By FRANCIS STUART. *Collins.* 7s. 6d.
Not too Narrow . . . Not too Deep. By RICHARD SALE. *Cassell.* 7s. 6d.
Standing Room Only. By WALTER GREENWOOD. *Cape.* 7s. 6d.
Men in Arms. By GEORGE SLOCOMBE. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.

The greatest comedians are very often Jews—no doubt because our sense of humour is still excited most readily by the spectacle of somebody else in a painful, humiliating or even dangerous position, and the Jewish temperament has a decidedly masochistic strain. It has also rare interpretative subtlety. Readers who enjoy a Chaplin film, and who derive a peculiar satisfaction from the sort of hopeless dignity, half self-pitying, half defiant, while the comedian struggles against his fate, are recommended to try *Homage to Blenholt*, a knock-about comedy of American-Jewish life by Mr. Daniel Fuchs. Here is something of the loneliness and pathos that surrounds Chaplin's earnest but perpetually thwarted efforts to make good. Here, too, is something of the resignation with which Chaplin shrugs his shoulders, raises his hat and, a small hunched figure—so small that he suggests an individual stripped of the outer layers of convention and success, whittled down to the inner core of personality—sets off, hands in pockets, along the road. *Homage to Blenholt* describes the existence of a crowded tenement. All the main characters are Jewish; all are extremely excitable and rush through the narrative, slamming doors and shouting angry words, in a state of exasperation and distraction more or less pronounced. Max Balkan is an idealistic young man, who loves poetry, cherishes impracticable dreams of wealth and power, and circularises manufacturers with inventions that are never accepted. When the story opens, he is just returning from an early morning walk and is on his way to collect his friends Coblenz and Munves, who have promised to accompany him to the funeral of Blenholt, a local racketeer, associated in Balkan's imagination with adventure and romance. His mood is exalted; but then reality trips him up. In the corridors of the tenement building lurk two horrible little boys, Chink and Hesh; and, when he enters his friend's flat, he finds Coblenz suffering agonies of toothache (which he is doing his best to drown in alcohol) and reduced to a condition of almost apoplectic fury by the sound of children roller-skating on the floor above. Next, he visits Munves; but Munves, the other-worldly scholar, is plunged in etymological research; and, wherever he goes, an elderly pedlar of artificial pearls dogs his footsteps, thrusting his head around the door like an endlessly recurring spectre of poverty and old age. At home, the conditions of life are scarcely more tolerable. Mr. Balkan, once a Yiddish tragedian, now condemned to carry sandwich-boards for the proprietor of a beauty parlour, Mrs. Balkan, fat, voluble and harassed, and their daughter, whose ambitions and ideas have been taken straight from the movies and magazines, carry on an uninterrupted three-cornered conflict which fills every room of the tiny flat with excitement and noise.

Except by quotation, it would be difficult to illustrate the quality of a book that has made me laugh more than any other novel I have read for some long time. The dialogue is often extraordinarily funny; and through every sentence we seem to recognise the intonation with which it was delivered—to catch a glimpse of a flushed and contorted face. The effect is equally depressing and exhilarating. Packed into their small stifling rooms, the Balkan family remind one of a famous episode in the last Marx Brothers' picture, where a mob of actors and actresses are piled head over heels into a minute cabin; and their plight produces the same feeling of slightly horrified amusement. The chief drawback of the book is that Max and Munves, the idealists, and Rita and Ruth, the feminine realists, are respectively rather too much alike. Max Balkan's poetic reveries are sometimes tedious; but we never tire of Chink and Hesh and their little playmate Goldie; while the central theme of the narrative—the contrast between the Proud and the Meek, between the mild majority and the unscrupulous few—is ingeniously brought out in the hero's sufferings. Miss Cannan deals with a similar contrast. John Marlow is meek—as crushed and colourless a piece of humanity as you could find in the senior common-room of any minor English public school. He hates being a schoolmaster; but he has a sister—deserted by her husband—and an idiot nephew who depend on him for support; so he continues to exercise a profession that fills him with wretchedness. Attenborough, on the other hand, is big, vulgar, self-assertive, prosperous. Marlow tumbles into a love-affair with Attenborough's wife, is caught in the act, lures his rival to a deserted cricket pavilion, and there, obeying the impulse of the moment, bludgeons him to death. Having murdered the husband, he feels that it is impossible to keep up his relationship with the woman who has opened his eyes to the meaning of life and love. He attempts to confess his crime—only to discover that no one will take his confession seriously. At the end of the book, he loses his foothold while he is botanising on a dangerous Cornish cliff. . . .

Frightened Angels is fairly convincing, but faintly devitalising. Miss Cannan has no difficulty in persuading us that her hero is an unhappy and commonplace young man, that he carries a heavier burden than human beings ought to bear; but she finds it more difficult to convince us that he is worth writing about. After a time, her insistence on the drabness and darkness of John Marlow's surroundings becomes exceedingly wearisome; and it is with relief that we turn to the light, clear colours employed by Mr. Francis Stuart. *The White Hare* is a rather puzzling production. A tale of wild and wistful Irish gentry, it is written with quite unusual skill and grace, and, up to page 125, manages to hold the balance between sensibility and sentimentality to very good effect. Mr. Stuart has a poetic feeling for the use of words. With equal eloquence, he can describe a champion greyhound coursing a hare across the jumbled stone-walled landscape of Southern Ireland and the beauty of the hare's warm inert body as it lies dead on the kitchen table. His dialogue is natural; his faculty of observation sharp and direct; but, alas, he tempts Nemesis too far. Admiration is succeeded by discomfort. No, I cannot believe in Dominic, the little boy of ten whose romantic personality so fascinates the girl whom his elder brother, Patrick, loves and marries that she can never enjoy complete happiness with her charming husband. The situation becomes ominous as the boy grows older. But Dominic solves the problem by running away to sea; and the ramshackle tramp steamer on which he is travelling goes down with all hands.

Such is the bare outline of the story—but a very inadequate outline, which does less than justice to a well-written and, at least in the opening chapters, curiously attractive book. *The White Hare* should appeal to the section of the reading public that welcomed *The Constant Nymph*, a book which in many ways it closely resembles, since it contains the same spirited, if slightly sentimental, protest against respectability of the earning and begetting middle-class sort. Mr. Stuart, nevertheless, has ventured too far—a criticism which might also be levelled against Mr. Richard Sale's *Not too Narrow . . . Not too Deep*. To put it bluntly, this is the story of a modern incarnation of Jesus Christ on the high seas. We begin with a ruffianly pack of thugs and adventurers, all escaping in an open boat from a French penal colony. They are as tough a crew as ever disembarked on the hospitable shores of Venezuela—bandits, sadists, sex-maniacs; while at their head marches Henry Moll, who has "the chiselled nose of an aesthete . . . the empty eyes of a corpse," and who is "eccentric enough always to carry with him a battered Bible, for the sheer delight he derived in mocking it." To them, enter the mysterious Jean Cambreau, a kind of nautical Third Floor Back. But it would be superfluous—perhaps irreverent—to pursue the book to its edifying conclusion.

Mr. Walter Greenwood and Mr. George Slocombe are both disappointing. From the author of *Love on the Dole*, I should have expected something a little solider than *Standing Room Only, or A Laugh in Every Line*, a rather heavy-handed comedy dealing with the vicissitudes that accompany the production of a modern theatrical success; while Mr. George Slocombe, who is an experienced foreign correspondent, might have given us a more stirring and realistic drama of international politics than *Men in Arms*. Journalism has its penalties as well as its pleasures; and Mr. Slocombe's book contains a gloomy warning to the young man who hopes to become a special correspondent and a modern novelist at the same time. Seldom have I read a narrative in which the clichés were so closely packed, or in which the expected and well-worn epithet was so likely to occur. A character cannot light a cigar without puffing out clouds of "aromatic" smoke; his suit, if he is well dressed, is bound to be "immaculate"; while the description of the international adventuress which starts on page 12 is in the finest and lushest tradition of the popular *feuilleton*. What a pity that Lydia Karine wears green jade earrings, at a time when even South Kensington has begun to discard them!

PETER QUENNELL

DE QUINCEY

Thomas De Quincey. By HORACE AINSWORTH EATON. *Oxford University Press.* 24s.

From every biography of De Quincey—even from Professor Eaton's, which is dull enough—there emerges an appealing figure, curiously ageless, haunted, diminutive, courteous, and possessing both learning and charm. Appealing, but without the self-pity which makes Coleridge, for example, sometimes intolerable. The two have much in common: opium, brilliant talk, deep scattered knowledge, helplessness in the face of the world. De Quincey is the more admirable figure. He has the innocence and a sort of astonished courage which are occasionally allied with timidity. His generosity (we cannot imagine Coleridge, in any circumstances, reversing that gift of £300) was exceptional; he never made excuses. Despite his fascination he is not an easy subject for the biographer. Mr. Sackville West, in *A Flame in Sunlight*, successfully drew a most sensitive and sympathetic portrait of this strange baffled genius; Professor Eaton gives us only the harassed man of letters. Some of his material is new, and he does, it is true, "supersede Jupp," the previous authority. Unfortunately he also possesses the touch which makes so many biographies akin. The little reference on page 1 to "the sad life De Quincey was to lead"—an almost unnoticeable touch of complacency—is ominous of the flatness to follow. A few pages later Mrs. De Quincey is shown to us, with "her young brood," as "an actor in a slow and inevitable tragedy"; and though with a few such lapses the tone of a standard Life is evenly sustained, we know that Professor Eaton, however expert and patient a collector of facts, will never make any real discoveries about the mind of De Quincey. Of what is and what is not important in such a case a footnote on page 240 will be found explanatory:

> I must here make a general acknowledgment of my indebtedness throughout this section to the important brochure upon *De Quincey and the Westmorland Gazette*, by Mr. Charles Pollitt, a late editor of the paper.

No important revelation, of course, appears. But it is the recognised approach. A similar zeal has provided us in the past with Dostoevsky's roulette system, Strindberg's letters to an unknown chemist, Balzac's washing bills, and a list of Dickens's addresses in London; and it is to such methods of biography that we owe the impression that the life of a great writer is as different as possible from his writings, that in fact it is even more boring and trivial than our own. I doubt if any biography can be called a good biography unless it to some degree suggests the peculiar intensity with which its subject has lived. Sometimes this can be done by copious quotation; with De Quincey, not. In his case, an extension of feeling on the part of the biographer is, I think, essential. Mr. Sackville West succeeded in taking us through those later years, in which little enough happened and even the interest of De Quincey's writings falls off, without diminution of sympathy or vividness. Professor Eaton is often dull, even when his detail is interesting.

Probably the only *important* discovery about De Quincey would be fresh facts about his childhood; and that seems now to be out of the question. Professor Eaton, like all other biographers of De Quincey, recognises the importance in De Quincey's life of his childhood; but he is helpless, because most of the facts belong to the other end of the life. It should be possible, however, with such record as exists, to establish a closer connection between the childhood experiences and the prose of the Confessions, the Mail Coach, and the Suspiria. Many of De Quincey's dreams originated from a few visions, or revelations, in early childhood, the most important of which was the sight of his dead sister lying on a bed while through the open window he saw a sunlit summer landscape. His shortsightedness (what critic has noticed this?), of which he was unaware till seventeen years later, would exaggerate the legendary quality of the background and the nearness, the inescapable detail, of the dead face. The scene affected De Quincey so much that he fell into a trance from which, a long time after, he tells us, a footstep on the stair awakened him. So profoundly did this first revelation of death impress him, that the ideas of death and farewell, eternity, summer, and a desolate wind (which sprang up as he gazed) were henceforth locked in his mind. "*Life is finished!*"—the cry was prophetic. He never escaped the mood of a suspended existence, of "everlasting farewells." A whole sequence of passages in his writings are variations on this one scene; and it is reiterated in his life. Whatever the immediate causes of his abrupt flight from Manchester, the conditions are repeated: midsummer, the wind, a trance interrupted by a step on the stairs, and this time he kisses the portrait of an unknown seventeenth century lady hanging on the wall. At Oxford, perhaps (here we are given no details, either by De Quincey or his biographers), it may have been the same. Many smaller incidents also made their mark. There was a swing, for example, at his guardian's, to which his brother William was fond of tempting him (Professor Eaton quotes the passage):

> a most ambitious swing, ascending to a height beyond anything I have since seen in fairs or public gardens. Horror was at my heart regularly as the swing reached its most aerial altitude; for the oily, swallow-like fluency of the swoop downwards threatened always to make me sick . . . But in defiance of panic I continued to swing whenever he tauntingly invited.

The echo of this, fifteen years later, is to be found in *Suspiria de Profundis*, when the image of the swing, extending over twenty lines, is used to suggest the tremendous rise and fall, the pleasure and the pains, of opium.

A closer study, too, should surely be made of the texture of De Quincey's prose. Much has been written for and against that style which appeared fully developed in his first and best work, the *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, but so far as I know no one has undertaken a thorough examination. Its origins might be sought principally in Milton, Thomas Browne, Jeremy Taylor, Donne, in German romanticism, in mediaeval dream poetry. Possibly, like Coleridge, De Quincey took from other books, and a *Road to Xanadu* about De Quincey would be both fascinating and valuable. The *Confessions of an Opium Eater* occupies a unique place in English prose comparable to that of *The Ancient Mariner* in English poetry; without it, De Quincey would fall to the level of Lamb and Hazlitt, and below them. If you would test his art at its finest, compare the elaborate dream-fugue appended to *The English Mail Coach*—the sort of piece, one imagines, he laboured at in his menage—with the marvellous recession of dreams in *The Opium Eater*, the reappearances of Ann and the Malay, the moment, finally, when he wakes from visions of Oriental terror to find that it is noon, and his wife and children, in new dresses, are standing round the bed.

G. W. STONIER

BRAZEN VANITY

Parnell. A Biography by JOAN HASLIP. *Cobden-Sanderson.* 15s.

The problem of Charles Stewart Parnell was first posed to me at a somewhat early age. It was on a Sunday in May in 1881 and I was the not unwilling plaything of a bevy of schoolgirls, perhaps twice my age, to whom I had confessed that on the previous Friday I had entered the eighth year of my existence. Whereupon the one I was most eager to please cried: "Then you've come to the use of reason and can tell us what you think of Mr. Parnell." At that time this question could be asked without impropriety even in the playground of a Loretto Convent in Ireland, but it made me blush with shame. For, if she had asked me my opinion of General Colley, who had perished the previous January on Majuba Hill, I might have answered something superficially to the point, but of Parnell I could say nothing more illuminating than that I thought he wore whiskers and made speeches. For the moment I subsided into childishness, but before I had entered my teens I knew more about Parnell than many who write about him professionally seem to know even now.

I dare not claim to know more than Miss Haslip, even though I touch on points she does not trouble to mention. The interest roused in me by her book may be gauged by the statement that I took it up when a few pages from the end of Winifred Holtby's *South Riding*, and did not return to that masterpiece until I had read every word of Miss Haslip. There are over one hundred and fifty thousand, nearly all with some meaning, though one has an impression of occasional incoherence if not contradiction. This probably arises from the inadequate assimilation of matter from different sources: the following reads like a quotation from the *Eatanswill Gazette*:

> But in 1885 he was too dazzled by the glamorous promises of Hatfield, the portentous whispers of Hawarden, even to consider the plain and prosaic proposals of Highbury.

For the merely political and public side of Parnell's life, Barry O'Brien's lovingly welded biography published in 1898 can hardly be surpassed; but as Parnell was not instinctively a political animal nor, despite his colossal vanity, a public poseur, it has no more value as a portrait of the man than Gleig's *Life of the Duke of Wellington*. Parnell was a born leader of men, by virtue of the fury of his egoism, but the hours that he spent under arms with his kerns and gallowglasses were few compared with those he spent in the arms of his mistress. Miss Haslip gives us his portrait in the round with an art that my old friend O'Brien would have been ashamed to possess.

Parnell was neither a patriotic Irishman, nor a traitorous Englishman, nor a chivalrous American, nor a glamorous all-for-love hybrid: he was an Anglo-Irish landlord, more generous than just, attached to his native land and even its people, with a strain of insanely energetic Yankeeism, suffering from sexual desire he was too proud to wallow in, too weak to suppress, and too conventionally cowardly to satisfy in decent company. So his life, despite some glorious moments, was drowned in the dirty water of sensual false sentiment: dead at forty-five, the age at which Wellington triumphed and Napoleon fell, but juvenile for the leader of a Parliamentary party in recent times.

St. Peter's, Cornhill, though not architecturally distinguished, is for me one of the most interesting of London churches. Not only because its incumbent some years back, the Reverend George Doughty, had the temerity to read my verses, as foil to those of better poets, from his pulpit, nor yet because it is said to be built on the site of the original cathedral of the metropolis—St. Paul's being an afterthought—but because the Christian religion was expounded there a hundred years since by the father of a woman second only to Dervorgilla in her evil influence upon the history of Ireland. Miss Haslip seems to be under the impression that she was of Patrician origin, but this is only true in the sense that she had City forefathers.

The Rev. Sir John Page Wood, Bart., was the eldest son of Mr. Alderman Matthew Wood, champion of the Not So Good Queen Caroline, sister of Brunswick's fated chieftain and less honourable in her own fate. This royal cabotin appointed John Page Wood to be chancellor of her conscience when she made Brougham her Attorney and Denman her Solicitor. He married another Caroline, daughter of an Admiral, and had thirteen children, of whom one became the famous general, Sir Evelyn Wood, and another the accomplished demi-rep Kitty O'Shea. I use that harsh term deliberately, because it was her condition before Parnell laid eyes on her; and they never would have met had she not in her brazen vanity forced her company upon him. Miss Haslip picturesquely, but without exaggeration, describes how in 1880, "on a fine July afternoon during the second reading of Mr. Forster's Bill that Parnell, worn and harassed over a hundred different matters, was handed a card saying that two ladies who would like to see him were waiting outside in Palace Yard. . . . It must have been with mingled feelings of boredom and irritation that Parnell stepped out into the sunlight to greet Mrs. O'Shea." She goes on to tell us that:

> It was a case of love at first sight. . . . Parnell gave way to an infatuation for which there is no justification or explanation beyond the fact that he was a miserably lonely man snatching at his one chance of happiness. . . . It is hard to visualise how a man so shrewd and balanced in his political life could have walked out into Palace Yard and, within five minutes, lose his heart to a pretty, plump young woman who had no pretensions to great beauty, and who had come here to pursue him as so many English and American women had pursued him before.

Miss Haslip does visualise it, all the same, and enables us to see it too.

Though Parnell at thirty-four had so far beaten off the assaults of society women of too coming-on a disposition, he was nothing of a Galahad. Periodically he had indulged in apoplectic love affairs with barmaids, under the mentorship of that sordid Lothario, Mr. Biggar of Belfast; but he was faithful to the English Puritan tradition that it is immoral to go to bed with a gentlewoman unless she be a sister of the unconfined order of actresses. When Mrs. O'Shea invited him to hers he fell into the same error as General Bonaparte with Citoyenne Beauharnais, and took for granted that she would wish him to attempt the uphill task of making an honest woman of her.

But, though eager to enjoy her new lover, she was not weary of the physical attraction of her husband, of which that cunning dog was careful to stint her, shyly living apart from her (albeit at the expense of her family) to husband his resources. Besides, divorces cost money more agreeably spent on dinner parties, and she would sacrifice more comfort by offending her Aunt Benjamin than she could gain by becoming Parnell's wife, particularly after he had handed over five or six years' rent roll of Avondale to Captain O'Shea in compensation for the illusory seduction of his wife. In love she was soft as copra, but in finance hard as nails: when he had been in his grave twenty years she sold his silly love letters to be the laughing stock of the world.

To quote again Miss Haslip:

> From the day when Charles fell in love with Katherine, he became entangled in a life of constant lies and subterfuges, of humiliating pretences which had to be kept up before the outside world. These pretences meant nothing to Katherine, whose complicated married life had only been rendered possible through a series of sordid intrigues. She had preserved through it all that radiant youthful quality which rendered her capable of giving Charles moments of happiness which compensated him for all those niggardly, deceitful actions so galling to an honourable and fastidious man.

Parnell's world seems to have been full of women, noble and generous, prepared to give him all they had; for he charmed them all, Rosalinds or wallflowers: even irreproachable Mary Gladstone seems to have liked him no less than she did Lord Acton or Arthur Balfour. But he allowed himself to be fascinated by the disreputable. This was no tragic romance, but a dirty intrigue; and, although the husband's share in it was the most disgraceful and Parnell's the least, he had no right to complain of Tim Healy's gibe at the would-be mistress of the Irish party. The only plea in extenuation of her sins is that she had the misfortune to marry Captain William O'Shea.

Compared with O'Shea, Richard Pigott, forger and pornographer, seems to me an honourable man: at all events he did not build his fortunes on his wife's shame, and when the game was up he made one pitiful effort to save the last shred of self-respect by blowing out his poor dirty brains. It was not for him to live on to old age in Mayfair boasting with Othello that he had done the State some service.

The real heroes of Ireland are not the vainglorious, sex-ridden O'Connells and Parnells, but the humble and humane men of the people, such as Michael Davitt and James Connolly. And they were not merely the more steadfast and incomparably more courageous, but they were actually far the more cultured. O'Connell's notions of the history and even the geography of his country would shame a schoolboy, and Parnell, despite his intellectual ancestry, is recorded by his own brother to have read only one book; and that was written by a veterinary surgeon.

CONAL O'RIORDAN

RENEWAL FROM WAR

Journey to the Western Front after Twenty Years. By R. H. MOTTRAM. *Bell.* 7s. 6d.

To revisit old battlefields when peace has come is a peculiar enjoyment for anyone who was present in the war. I have known it in the Balkans, South Africa, the Dardanelles and France. Of course it is tragic, but I can speak for the excitement of recalling what the various parts of the armies did, and of discovering where the enemies were and what chances they took or lost. Mr. Mottram, the famous author of *The Spanish Farm*, has taken every opportunity of enjoying this absorbing interest to the full. In various capacities—mainly, I think, with mounted troops—he served for some three years up and down the British front in France, and he has revisited the scenes half a dozen times. The last time was in this very year, and in this valuable book he tells the record of what he found and saw.

I call it a valuable book, but to appreciate its real value one ought to know the country from Calais down to St. Quentin, and to be acquainted with the history that still attaches to all the names of the towns and villages, ridges and bits of plain from end to end. Of the thousands who went out, how many could now boast a personal memory of all or even of something that happened on that hard-fought front? After these eighteen or twenty years, perhaps, there may still be a million, and if there are so many, it will be to them that the book will make its chief appeal. "Here," they will say, "we were driven back, here we advanced, here we stood still for months in mud or cold, here came the blessed order to rest-camp or Blighty, and Mr. Mottram can tell us what the old places look like in these happier days." That the men enjoyed the war and went over the top with the joyous gleam of battle in their eyes, was one of the many pestilent myths that ran about like poison gas at the beginning of the war and were then obliterated by the rage of the men themselves. Mr. Mottram mentions one who really enjoyed war, and he met only two others, both captains.

His book is easy to follow because he adopts the simple method of taking each of the five armies in turn according to their place in the line from north to south—the Second Army on the wet flats of Flanders, the First in the coal district, the Third on the down-like country south of that, the Fourth beside the Ancre and Somme, the Fifth stationed a little further south to protect Amiens and the plain of Santerre. Of the supreme gallantry of that much-abused Fifth Army (Gough's Army) he says, after mentioning the final stand of the 9th Foot at Corunna:

> There was nothing in that small if gallant rearguard fight, nor in that of Walcheren, to parallel the day of March, 1918. A whole countryside burst into flames and sixty-four German divisions advanced to the attack. The wonder is that they advanced no more than fifteen kilometres in the initial stage. . . . The explanation is, I believe, to be found in the sacrifice of certain dauntless units, notably a battalion of the Manchester Regiment and one of the Devons.

But the author gives its due praise to each of the Armies in turn, reserving an unwonted tribute to the Third, of which one used to hear little in comparison with the Second and the Fourth.

Two other points give Mr. Mottram's account a fine distinction: as a student of history he always feels what was once passing upon the same scene "in the dark backward and abysm of time"; and he shows a very intimate knowledge of the English nature as seen in the customary irony of men and officers—an irony that pervades all classes except perhaps the "lower middle." It was that irony which puzzled the Germans and perhaps the French as well. It showed itself in jolly language and obscene songs at the most dangerous and inappropriate moments. *Tipperary* was all very well as a pair to the National Anthem, and *The Long, Long Trail* had beautiful music to it, but my own favourite was one that Mr. Mottram also quotes: "O, my, I don't want to die, I want to go 'ome! I want to go 'ome!" But if a German officer had attacked, supposing it to be a sign of shakiness and despair, he would soon have learnt better. As the author justly remarks: "I should say that it is quite impossible to calculate what British people will think or do under any imaginable circumstances."

As to those who mournfully foretell that the next war will be the end of us, he has the heartening courage to say:

> It is not so easy to obliterate life as short-sighted and ill-disposed people have always hoped. Inanimate Nature makes short work of our exhausting efforts to turn her into a mortuary, and even human nature . . . soon forgets, renews itself, and has difficulty in believing that its native place was ever a battlefield, a military zone, an Occupied Region, an invaded Fatherland.

That is the upshot or "moral" of his book, and all who were in his front of the war will wish to have accompanied him on his journey of memories and inspections resulting in a hope that sprang from the sight of renewed life in towns, villages and the generations of mankind.

HENRY W. NEVINSON

NIGERIA

Nigeria: A Critique of British Administration. By W. R. CROCKER. *Allen and Unwin.* 10s. 6d.

The main part of this book consists of the diary of an administrative officer, and in points of everyday detail and activity it probably differs little from the diaries kept by the author's fellow officials. What distinguishes it is his critical attitude, his refusal to accept shibboleths, his comments, often shrewd but not infrequently naive or even absurd, on the problems of native rule as he sees them.

The last eighty pages consist of what the author, somewhat grandiloquently, entitles "A Tract on Colonial Administration," the final chapter of which plunges irrelevantly and to little purpose into "the problem of public administration in the modern state." This part of the book offers little that is new, and is often painfully immature despite occasional comments which are pungently to the point. The general reader and the District Officer will, however, find much to interest them in the diary, and senior or retired officials will recall their own early enthusiasms and doubts which they will find depicted here, albeit with a pen more caustic than they cared to use.

The author does not specifically state how long he served in Nigeria, but from internal evidence one would hazard a guess that about three years must have brought him and his seniors to the end of their mutual endurance. It is doing him no injustice to suggest that his intolerance and habit of petulant criticism must have been as distasteful to them as their apparently crass stupidity was to him. Wider experience would have modified the outspokenness of youth and might possibly have suggested

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to him that not all senior officials are knaves or half-wits; but the diary would not have been nearly so entertaining, and it may be that unpalatable truths, or even half-truths, bluntly stated are as necessary to-day as the misguided gadfly was to Io.

The diary naturally moves from topic to topic as occasion serves, and the reviewer is forced to select from a very wide field a few points which the author does not trouble to summarise into a coherent whole. His knowledge of Africans is not as profound as one might assume from his habit of generalisation, and this habit has led him into a number of errors, the most serious of which is his mistaken view that women are chattels to be bought and sold, but he has the grace to admit that the anthropologist is getting some order out of the chaos of preconceived ideas.

Probably his most interesting criticism, and one that is most apposite to-day, is concerned with the problem of indirect rule. To this vexed question he devotes a chapter in the second part of the book, but his statement of the problem is there too parochial to be of much service and is not particularly lucid as to what indirect rule theoretically is. Of far greater interest and importance are the comments contained in the diary, which indicate that indirect rule has been in danger of atrophy. "The truth," he writes, "is that the administrative machine in Bauchi Emirate has been running creakily for some time . . . because the continuous oversight and encouragement and checking that are essential to the functioning of indirect rule have been lacking here for several years." He quotes with approval the Governor who in his report comments that this is not devolution and that the real problem of delegating responsibility is through and to the village. It appears to be perfectly true that indirect rule has become, in the author's words, a formula run to seed, and as it has been practised it has prejudiced the people as against their rulers, for the maintenance of whose supposed autocracy the policy has been too often misdirected. But I think that the author has allowed a justifiable prejudice to go too far when he suggests that institutions have broken down too completely for the successful operation of a revised policy of indirect rule which pays regard to principles rather than to personalities.

The trouble has been that the office has become such an incubus on a District Officer that he has not sufficient freedom to tour, to supervise and to get into touch with the people themselves. Without intimate contact the policy cannot be worked, and we read that a colleague of the author was only able to tour for fifteen days out of ninety-one, the remaining days being spent on routine office work at Headquarters. "All this paper work stands like a screen between the real people and their real rulers." Too frequent transfers, which make the officials dependent on interpreters, the absence of continuity, and the modern insistence on clerical work have made it impossible for District Officers to carry out their paramount duties, and a change must be made "that will enable Administrative Officers to administer. There must be a relentless frontal attack on the steady and increasing degradation of the administrative personnel into clerks."

The author draws attention to the inadequacies of an educational system which withdraws the people from the land and leads to a persistent decay of the indigenous arts and crafts, contrasting (though somewhat uncritically, it may be said) the education given in the Islamic schools of Northern Nigeria, which creates no rupture with indigenous cultures. He criticises arbitrary boundaries which bisect Emirates, provinces and even villages, a feature of our rule which is not confined to Nigeria and is everywhere resented. He prefers Islam to Christianity as a religion less destructive of African potentialities, though he appears to have a very false idea of African religious beliefs themselves on which to base such a dictum. He alludes to the often absurd application of our legal system with its insistence on technicalities which may deny justice, and points out cogently enough that Lugard promised the Emirates when they submitted that their religion would be safeguarded. But their law is part of their religion, and to substitute our law is often a direct violation of their religious beliefs. He sums it all up in a sentence, which well illustrates the difficulty of harmonising European and African cultures, when he writes that "the things which they regard as the least important and most tiresome in life we treat as the all-in-all, while what they regard as the end of life—ease and laughter—appears to have no existence among us."

A provocative and stimulating book, which does the officials of Nigeria less than justice and is sometimes definitely unfair to them. But despite its errors, its frequent exaggerations and the author's inability to appreciate any view-point but his own, *Nigeria* is well worth reading.

J. H. DRIBERG

GETTING AWAY FROM THE VICTORIANS

The Study of Poetry. By H. W. GARROD. *Oxford University Press.* 3s. 6d.

The Poems of Sir William Watson. *Harrap.* 7s. 6d.

Selections from the Poems of Dorothy Wellesley. *Macmillan.* 5s.

Work for the Winter. By JULIAN BELL. *Hogarth Press.* 3s. 6d.

Collected Poems. By ANDREW YOUNG. *Cape.* 6s.

Man, says Professor Garrod, by addiction to the tree of knowledge has admittedly incurred a poetic Fall. Quite so, and I imagine the tree's deadliest fruit, for an artist, is knowledge about art. We have learnt what a vast number of things *can* be done, and that one of them is very likely to be as good as another; and the modern Muse, in consequence, stands still at the junction of all possible pathways, tearing her hair with indecision.

> How can she choose when every choice is hers,
> Or, when she knows all secrets, not be mute?

However, one thing at least has long been settled—she can't and shan't merely go stodging along the post-Victorian track. And anyone, if there is anyone, who still wants to know why not, had better read the poems of Sir William Watson and be converted. They are the choice result of inbreeding among the classics, and seem, for the moment, to justify all the antics of dissent. Perhaps Sir William Watson was not really such a bad poet, comparatively speaking—but then his weakness is patent, because we see so exactly what he was trying to do.

Unfortunately, deciding not to write at all like Sir William Watson does not take one very far; the field of choice remains almost as vast as ever, and the curse of arbitrariness descends accordingly. Very likely you will go on to wonder "what the age needs," or make the curious resolve to be "of" it; like the centipede that was asked how it contrived to walk, you will find yourself distracted and perhaps immobilised by difficulties which boil down to the idea that there *is* a difficulty.

Mr. W. B. Yeats believes that there is, and has written Lady Gerald Wellesley a certificate of success in dealing with it. "Face to face," he says, "with the problem that has perplexed us all, she can unite a modern subject and vocabulary with traditional richness." One of his examples is enlightening: praising her line about the wild asses, "with stripe from head to tail, and moderate ears," he says: "No poet of my generation would have written 'moderate' exactly there . . . the ear, expecting some poetic word, is checked, delighted to be so checked, by the precision of good prose." But don't we know the deliberate-prosaic for a resource of Mr. Yeats's own later period? Uninstructed, I should have said that Lady Gerald Wellesley's real beauties are quite old-fashioned, as old-fashioned as the themes which give rise to them—autumn, the forest, the old house, memories of childhood—and why not? The novelty consists chiefly in her dread of rhythm; she checks and jerks her stanza like a nervous rider pulling at his horse's mouth. This ungracious rhythm is no doubt closely related to the prosaic word: let us, at all costs, avoid the barrel-organ.

Mr. Julian Bell's advantages are intelligence, culture and good will, out of which he produces pleasant and highly sympathetic verse. He knows (like Sir William Watson) almost too much poetry, but he is conscious of the age, and conscious of the duty of being conscious of it. This modernity does not go very deep, it merely gets in the way, making him bring out ideas clumsily for no reason at all, it seems, but to avoid plainness. And, as a result of it, the old familiar style and themes, when they do slip out, appear more hackneyed than necessary.

Mr. Andrew Young has got away—thanks to that peculiar brand of slyness recommended by Scripture. His poem, *The Bird*, suggests how as well as any.

> The blackbird darted through the boughs
> Trailing his whistle in a shrill dispute
> "Why do you loiter near our house?"
> But I was mute,
> Though as he perched with sidelong head
> I might have said,
> "I never notice nests or lovers
> In hedges or in covers;
> I have enough to do
> In my own way to be unnoticed too."

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—*The Times.*

ARROWSMITH

Threatened by an intrusive age, he has just sneaked off "like any stealthy beast"; his nature verse almost amounts to spiritual camouflage, it is so correct, sensitive and minute. He will seem to blend with tree or mist, scarecrow or wild creature, and defy the hunt, and yet there he is all the time—individual, imaginative, "conceited." These little poems never pretend to be great art, but they do with wonderful neatness and distinctness what they set out to do.

They are hardly lyrics, perhaps, yet it is a pity they so lack the essential lyric virtue—the singing quality. For it is difficult not to agree with Professor Garrod that, in some sense or other, rhythm *is* art. There are so many things to agree with in *The Study of Poetry* (a little book of lectures delivered in Canada) that it is nice to find Professor Garrod taking such a cheerful view of the future. He refuses to worry; there may be confusion just now, but it will blow over. Perhaps it may, and at any rate taking thought is obviously worse than useless, but one cannot help wondering if the lyric has not reached pretty well the end of its tether. For consider: when it began, it had only three subjects worth speaking of—love, death and spring; these were treated again and again, with extreme shallowness and monotony, and the effect was magical. We can't go back to that; we can't very well go on much farther; then what next? Of course, it may be that art and civilisation are to come to an end together, and begin again, like Palgrave's *Golden Treasury*, with "Spring, the sweet Spring."

K. JOHN

SMUTS

General Smuts. By SARAH GERTRUDE MILLIN. Volume II. *Faber and Faber.* 18*s.*

Mrs. Millin's second volume, on General Smuts's war and post-war doings, is more successful than the first. The novelist intrudes less, and his own speeches and important private papers speak for themselves. Smuts, it is true, is apt to say what he wants to think and feel, not what he really thinks; but the book shows insight and clearly reveals both his character and the motives that inspired him. War historians, who will have to take account of new material, would often be glad of more dates and fuller references.

Work at the centre of things had attractions for one who had so long been outside the current of world affairs. Pleading that he did not want a mere sideshow, he refused the Palestine command and, instead, became the "Cabinet's handy-man"—a war-time waste of exceptional energy and imagination. Smuts, with his belief in the good faith of Britain, his idealisation of a Commonwealth of free peoples, was rare propaganda for the British Empire as the reconciled enemy. His many missions were not ignoble. He was sent as negotiator to the Generals in France, to the Welsh miners, to Austria and Hungary. He helped to mediate between the newly fledged Air Force and the jealous older Services, leaving his mark, Mrs. Millin claims, on the Royal Air Force and on the organisation of the air defences of London. His later contribution to the settlement of Ireland was perhaps his chief success.

Scattered material, with no other unifying thread, is effectively arranged to reveal Smuts's personality. The effect is cumulative, and leaves a sense of tragedy. The Smuts of the first volume was confident, hard, successful, borne by a stream of unusual events which seemed to present him with one opportunity after another. It was hard to believe in the reality of his philosophical dreams. Here the dreams are shown to be what mattered. He was the only leading statesman who in the midst of war could spare a thought for a world without war, permanently organised for peace. The one object worthy of his faith he found in the League; and in the failure and discredit of the League one realises, almost with a shock, that in spite of his great reputation, he too has failed. Doggedly believing in the perfectibility of humanity and of human institutions, he thought the nations would themselves realise the necessity of collectivism, the folly of the Peace Treaty. In these last fatal months we have missed his familiar, stimulating "warnings." The old unquenchable optimism may well be shaken. Mrs. Millin quotes on a new note: "I am coming to an end."

Smuts's compromises have cost him dear, his belief that the lesser must be sacrificed for the sake of the greater, sometimes the ultimate to the immediate—as in his refusal to apply his principle of freedom to the rights of Africans. At great risk to his own position he has repeatedly taken drastic action to maintain the old order but has seldom dared to initiate changes whose results he could not calculate. In his own South Africa he was perhaps forced to attempt what seemed within his power rather than risk failure, if not civil war. As he himself said: "They are only a handful of whites and each man counts for more than he is worth. Each private thinks he is a general." Remembering how he chose to turn his back on honours and opportunities in England, to return to South Africa—to insult and heart-sickening futility—we find it hard to blame him.

In the great world, free from these trammels, he has always been at his best—as in this volume. But his South African reputation for hard dealings with Natives, Indians, Labour agitations, has dogged him even here and weakened his influence as European idealist. When the world has recovered from its present fever his vision may appear prophetic, and the failure be attributed to the forces that have come near to overwhelming civilisation itself.

W. M. MACMILLAN

A COMMUNIST LOOKS AT THE WORLD

World Politics, 1918-1936. By R. PALME DUTT. *Gollancz.* 5*s.*

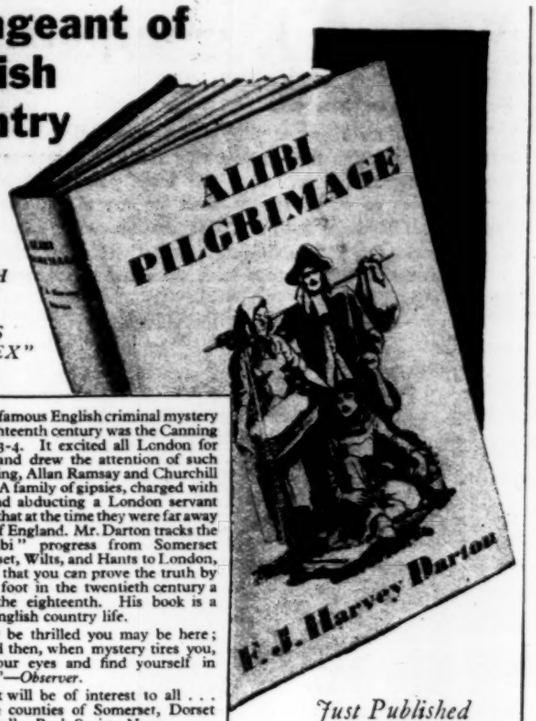
As readers of the *Labour Monthly* are well aware, its editor, Mr. Palme Dutt, has a very pretty talent for invective, and is something of a stylist when he lets himself go. In *World Politics*, however, he seems to be holding himself in, and the effect on his style is not good. In fact, a good deal of his book is difficult to read; and only in the later chapters does he get back to something approaching his better manner of writing.

In form, *World Politics* is not a narrative of events recited in order, but a general commentary on the world situation to-day in the light of the situation which has developed since the end of the Great War. This situation, as Mr. Dutt sees it, is dominated more than ever by the rivalries of the great imperialist Powers. Mr. Dutt dismisses as superficial the analysis which attempts to divide these Powers into two groups—the satisfied and the unsatisfied. He sees the root cause of their antagonism not in the possession or lack of Colonial Empires, but in their internal class structures, or in other words the antagonisms inherent in developing capitalism itself. The expansionist threats to world peace he traces primarily to the desires and necessities of rival monopolistic groups of capitalists operating in and through the leading imperialist States. This view, correct as it may be in general, leads him, I think, to lay undue stress upon Anglo-American antagonism as a dominant factor in current world affairs. References to this antagonism between the Imperialisms of Great Britain and America and to America as a leading imperialist State abound throughout the book; but nowhere is any clear account given of the nature of this particular antagonism or of the issues which Mr. Dutt deems to make Great Britain and the United States irreconcilable rivals incapable of any sort of co-operation. It is, of course, true enough, that, as Mr. Dutt points out, Great Britain lamentably failed to give any support to America in checking Japanese aggression in the Far East while there was still time; but it is questionable whether this failure was due mainly, as he supposes, to Great Britain's desire to strengthen Japan as a counterpoise to American or Russian influence in the Pacific.

Mr. Dutt is on far stronger ground when he is dealing with the problems raised by the revival of militant Imperialism in the Fascist countries and with the attitude of the imperialist Powers towards the victorious Socialism of the Soviet Union. In existing circumstances he, of course, favours a "People's Front," internationally as well as nationally—that is to say a linking together of the Soviet Union and the quasi-democratic Powers of Western Europe in a collective pact against Fascist aggression. He is also on strong ground in exposing the reasons for the weakness and vacillation of British policy, and for the strong pro-Nazi sympathies felt by many sections of the British ruling class. Imperialist capitalism, he points out, wants a strong capitalist Germany as a bulwark against Communism, and realises that the only possible alternative to Nazism in Germany is a form of Communism which would make the world proletarian revolution a direct force throughout Europe. He sees clearly that it will require a big battle of forces in Great Britain and a clear victory of some sort of Left combination to make this country take its stand on the side of France and the Soviet Union against Hitler's Germany and Mussolini's Italy. In fact, short-sighted Imperialism is more likely to play, under the cloak of isolationism, a pro-

A Pageant of English Country Life

By the Author of "ENGLISH FABRIC" "THE MARCHES OF WESSEX" etc.



THE most famous English criminal mystery of the eighteenth century was the Canning Case of 1753-4. It excited all London for over a year, and drew the attention of such men as Fielding, Allan Ramsay and Churchill the satirist. A family of gipsies, charged with assaulting and abducting a London servant girl, pleaded that at the time they were far away in the West of England. Mr. Darton tracks the gipsies' "alibi" progress from Somerset through Dorset, Wilts, and Hants to London, and suggests that you can prove the truth by repeating on foot in the twentieth century a journey of the eighteenth. His book is a pageant of English country life.

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* NELSON *

Fascist part in current European affairs, and thus, unless it is checked by a popular movement too strong to be resisted, to build up Fascist power in Europe to a point which will make certain in the long run the defeat of the British imperialists themselves. The moral of the whole tangled situation, in Mr. Dutt's view, is that imperialist world war is inevitable sooner or later—and probably sooner—unless it is prevented by the resolution of class antagonisms within the leading countries by the decisive victory of Socialism.

G. D. H. COLE

SHORTER NOTICES

The Statesman's Year Book, 1936. Edited by M. EPSTEIN. *Macmillan.* 20s.

Even the most pernickety critic could hardly find fault with the *Statesman's Year Book*. The present issue, under the long-continued and skilful editorship of Dr. Epstein, is as good as its predecessors—and that is high praise. Within its 1,500 or so pages there is compressed an extraordinary amount of information relating to every country in the world (and to the League of Nations and I.L.O. into the bargain). The political matter and the economic, social and military statistics are as accurate and as up to date as possible. And the general arrangement, a full index, and a short list of important books on each country, all help to make an invaluable work of reference.

William Byrd. By EDMUND H. FELLOWES. *Oxford University Press.* 15s.

This authoritative and extremely thorough book on what some have considered (not without reason) the greatest of English composers, is primarily to be recommended to scholars and specialists. To be sure, the ordinary music-lover will find much in it to interest him; but the discussion is conducted on a high technical level designed to be of service mainly to students of Jacobean music. Mr. Fellowes recognises the difficulty which confronts the inexperienced listener in the presence of this music: its uniformity, which makes it very hard to distinguish the individual features of any one composer from those of the rest. Yet, of course, the features are there; and the one which especially distinguishes Byrd is his curiously attractive simultaneous use of the major and minor third, in writing for voices (a discord, in those days before the invention of the tempered scale, meant something rather different from what it means to us). This feature may possibly be traced to Palestrina, who exercised a strong influence on Byrd, as the latter's extraordinarily impressive Masses otherwise attest. Yet, lovely as is the bulk of Byrd's religious music, it is probably in his secular madrigals and keyboard music that his original genius is best displayed. As Mr. Fellowes points out, the influence of Henry VII was paramount in the laicisation of music—an influence that was mainly responsible for the flowering of England's greatest age of music, in which Byrd was to play one of the most distinguished parts. His life, as recounted by Mr. Fellowes, does not seem to have been a very agreeable one: poverty dogged his steps and with it that most fatiguing of all avoidable ills, a perpetual series of lawsuits. Death, however, found him in a comparatively comfortable position as Master of Music to Lord Worcester. The musical examples in this book are many and well chosen, and the evidences of a very thorough musical knowledge are displayed on every page.

The Abyssinia I Knew. By GENERAL VIRGIN. *Macmillan.* 8s. 6d.

Lent by the Swedish Government to the Emperor of Abyssinia to act as his military and political adviser, General Virgin was in residence in Addis Ababa from May, 1934, until October, 1935, when a breakdown in health forced him to leave a country the climate of which punished him severely. The sixteen months, however, during which he lived and worked in close and continual touch with the Negus and his Government saw the burgeoning of the Italian menace, that after the General's departure burst all bounds and overwhelmed the country. Here we have a cool clear account of the opening of the imbroglio that, magnified into an armed defiance by Italian diplomacy, was the prelude to the gratuitous and wanton invasion we have witnessed. To the absolute correctness of conduct on the Abyssinian side throughout the dispute General Virgin bears disinterested and unimpeachable testimony and proves beyond a peradventure the complete disingenuousness of Italy's approach to the breach that was to give her megalomania the opportunity it craved. General Virgin's quiet record of events provides a really valuable foot-note to the history of a national and international tragedy.

America Goes to Press. By LAURENCE GREENE. *Harrap.* 10s. 6d.

This is a collection of contemporary newspaper reports of notorious events in American history from the Declaration of Independence to the *Titanic* disaster. In addition to the important historical events related, there are included a few journalistic stunts and canards. The Civil War material is particularly interesting. The book cannot be recommended for steady reading. However exciting or "epoch-making" the reported events may have been at the time the padding, conjecture and tentative opinion which accompany them are tiresomely stale to-day. *America Goes To Press* is nevertheless pleasant to dip into and should interest the social historian.

Week-end Competitions

No. 334

Set by Roger Marvell

There is often a phrase with which unconsciously we reveal to our over-perceptive friends just that fault in ourselves which we are most anxious to conceal. The usual prizes will be awarded for examples of such phrases used by any six of the following types: 1. The social snob; 2. The aesthetic snob; 3. The prig; 4. The pedant; 5. The domestic tyrant; 6. The stingy person; 7. The liar; 8. The person with no sense of humour; 9. The egoist; 10. The toady.

The give-away should not be too blatant.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, August 14th.

2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.

3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.

4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 332

Set by George Christ

You are the Negus. Geneva notifies you that Ethiopia's subscription is now due. Reply on a postcard in not more than thirty words. We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the best entries.

Report by George Christ

There were ninety-five entries for this competition. Some had to be set aside as coming under the head of mere vulgar abuse, but not quite so many as I expected. At the outset I decided to be firm and not to allow any cocking of verbal snooks to get past me—a firmness strengthened by some of the entries, notably one confined to one short word in French. I began to relent on reaching the Latin effort of William Bliss, which I cannot forbear to quote:

> Mehercle! Est vobis gena sanguinea! Ad damnum injuriam superingeritis. Ite ad Tartarum sempiternum—et requisitionem vestram ponite ubi simius nuces deposuit.

In sharp contrast to this Greiser-like rudeness is an unsigned entry posted from Newton Abbot. "Thank you for services rendered," it states with simple politeness, "I enclose my subscription." Geneva might miss the point of that, but hardly of the dignified reply sent in both by John Comerford and Robert Elkin regretting inability to pay owing to circumstances over which the League has had no control. Blunter is Joan Jakes's "You have wrung the neck of the Ethiopian goose and there are no more golden eggs."

More than one attempt made use of the obvious pun about the League working in a *collective* capacity. I also like Denis Botterill's plea that the affairs of Ethiopia are now in the hands of the official deceiver.

Thirty words is a small space in which adequately to confess the sins of Geneva, and this handicap proved the undoing of most of the entries. Maurice Gerrard, for example, would most certainly have made a success of his parody of Dr. Johnson's letter to Chesterfield if he had had more space to play with. Addressing his note to the League of Procrastinations he wrote, "the notice you have taken of my membership, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am 'civilised' and do not want it." Realising the need for brevity, Scholasticus sent a curt "For what?"

That Italy should meet the bill is an idea shared by many, expressed best by Coleridge Hills: "Gentlemen,—Perhaps you mislaid letters advising that B. Mussolini was taking over my premises. Forgive p.c., but Imperial stationery was left behind; otherwise move was a *complete* success." Also Jacqueline Goodacre: "Your account returned herewith. We assume you sent it here in error, as you delivered the goods to Mr. B. Mussolini, who will doubtless settle the matter with you." Ethiopia's strong counter-claim on Geneva was not overlooked. B. N. S. wrote: "I thought you were a burglary insurance. I find you are a burial club. I therefore lodge my claim for funeral expenses—in lira, please."

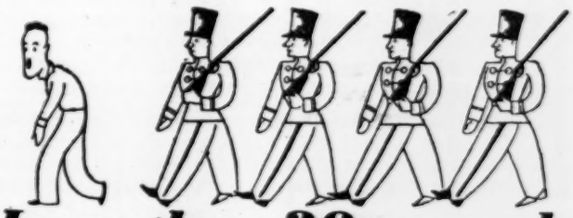
Haile Selassie's dignity is well preserved in many of the entries, notably by Keith Toms (If you had kept your word as efficiently as you keep your accounts my country would not be under the necessity of paying her subscription in lire) and Olive Bowtell (I deeply regret the inability of my country to square accounts with the League, remaining confident that failure to fulfil obligations will not fail to meet with your tolerant indulgence).

"Critic" in A London Diary,

NEW STATESMAN AND NATION, May 30, wrote :

On a brick wall at the end of a narrow East End cul-de-sac a cricket wicket was chalked, denoting that street football was suspended and that summer had officially begun. This chalked wicket inspired Ian Hay's really moving address at the Annual Meeting of the Children's Country Holidays Fund last Tuesday. The late Canon Barnett and Dame Henrietta Barnett founded the Fund fifty-two years ago for the purpose of sending away poor London children who would not be able to get a holiday otherwise. Last year 33,477 children, the largest number since the war, were given a fortnight's holiday, and they included blind or mentally deficient children. "Given?" Well, out of the 30*s.* which it costs per child, the parents contributed, on the average, 8*s.* 3*d.* Some paid less, some more, some nothing at all. The parents of each child are assessed according to their means, not an easy task when, as one parent, whose income was stated to average 25*s.*, explained to a doubting schoolmaster, "Well, some weeks it's £2, some £3, but the average is 25*s.*" I have heard a lot about the C.C.H.F. from a friend who, as a child, was given his first two holidays in the country through it. A day in the country for a slum child is a good thing, but a fortnight which the C.C.H.F. gives is much more than fourteen times better.

The Fund is made up of thousands of small gifts as well as large ones, so please send what you can afford, NOW, to D. O. Malcolm, Esq., Hon.-Treasurer, CHILDREN'S COUNTRY HOLIDAYS FUND, Room X, 17 Buckingham Street, W.C.2.



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The Publisher,
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A surprising number of people make the Negus send his cheque, either as a dignified rebuke or to demonstrate that repudiation of obligations is one-sided. H. W. Haycocks hit on the happy idea of a cheque drawn in the spirit of the Covenant and therefore as a scrap of paper. Guy Hadley answers Geneva with Geneva's own weapon, and announces the appointment of a committee and several sub-committees to consider the question.

For all I know the prize ought to go to Digby Willoughby. With a penmanship that wins my admiration he sent in a note in what I assume to be the official language of the Ethiopian Government. Unfortunately, the note would probably be as little understood in Geneva as it was by me. I tried to get it translated, but—well, have you ever looked on a Bank Holiday for someone who knows Abyssinian languages? Anyway, the League only recognises French and English, which lets me out, I think.

The prizes are awarded first to G. T. Holmes and second to E. F. Gray.

FIRST PRIZE

Fee covering your commission as agents in respect of the transfer of my lands and property to the Italian gentleman enclosed. Hail(e).

SECOND PRIZE

Gentlemen,

My country having already paid to the full, I can, at present, only send you 5s. (two half-crowns). The other 28 pieces of silver will follow.

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 189.—DOWN ON THE FARM

"Life on this farm is difficult," said old Drover, the thatcher.

"Aye, it be that," said old Shepherd, the drover, in his strong Glebeshire accent.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

"Why," said old Drover (I won't attempt to give his remarks in dialect) "it's all this muddle of names and occupations. There are ten of us employed on the farm—Shepherd here, myself, Carter, Thatcher and Ploughman. That's five of us; and each of us has a son—that makes ten. Now out of that ten (if you follow me so far) there are two of each ——"

"Sounds like Noah's Ark," I interjected.

"There are two of each," said Drover, unsmiling. "Two drovers, two shepherds, two carters, two thatchers and two ploughmen."

"It would be very convenient," said I, "if each of you followed the occupation corresponding to his name. That, you know, is how names like yours originated."

"Certainly that would be convenient," said Drover. "But as it happens, we go to the other extreme. Not one of us follows the calling that corresponds to his name; nor has any son the same vocation as his father."

I tried to sort the muddle out, but all I could learn, by direct enquiry, was that young Ploughman is neither a carter nor a drover; that young Thatcher is not a ploughman; and that young Carter is not a shepherd. I also found out that the occupation of the younger namesake of young Drover's occupation is the namesake of the son who is a drover.

What is Mr. Ploughman, Senior?

PROBLEM 187.—CROSS-COUNTRY LIFE

It can be ascertained, by trial, that the scores of the teams must have been:

Last Year:	Alphadale	26
	Betaburn	29
This Year:	Betaburn	39
	Harehall	40
	Alphadale	41

Whence, by further experiment, it can be ascertained that the Harehall runners were bunched together in the 6th to the 10th position, and that *Jack Smith came in 13th, last but one of the Betaburn runners.*

[*Comments.* "What a labour!" "It took me about two hours."]

PROBLEM 186

A set of Low's cartoons goes to Miss M. Pinner, 17 Clifton Grove, Rhyl, Flintshire.

Three points are awarded.

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10s. Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope, but on separate sheets of paper.

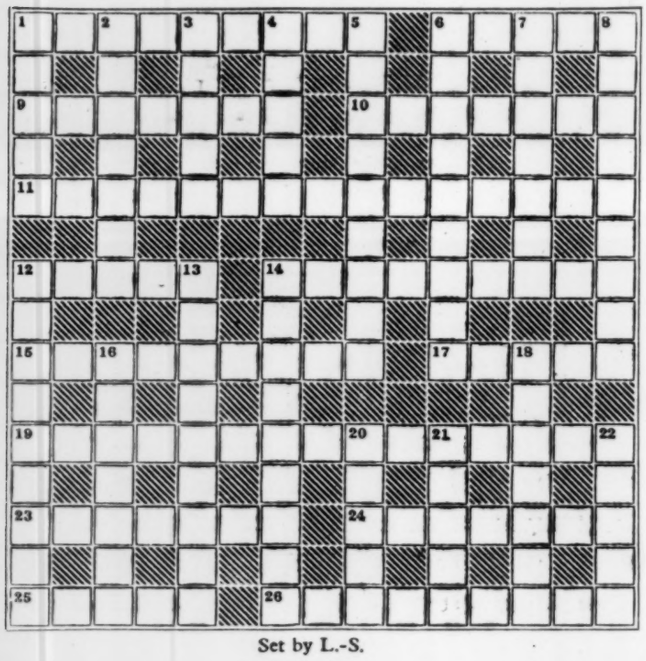
Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 335

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday. Prize-winners should address their claims to the Editor.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is

Mr. Alan L. Bealls, 9a Holly Lodge Gardens, Highgate, N.6.

ACROSS

1. Of a yielding disposition.
6. Race back.
9. How one comes to, but not when one is senseless.
10. I can get into the cellar when it is broken.
11. Start of a petition to Whitehall?
12. It holds tight, but goes on 15 if it loses its head.
14. Spectacle made by young Red Indians?
15. It is only intended to carry a light weight.
17. The bird returned to find young Robert at home.
19. Corporative advisers.
23. Violence that will exorcise ill-temper?
24. Telephone tone of one affianced.
25. The sort of music to make one hop it.
26. Is this what enables motorists to feel their way?

DOWN

1. A noise in the Clan Gathering.
2. Where B R N O broadcasts from.
3. Needed to keep up a revel.
4. The negro's master turns up in this country.
5. Not the railwaymen's orchestra.
6. Colour of Black Forest foliage?
7. Does it give one a clean look?
8. Where people do much ringing up.
12. Deadly fluid, except to a reptile.
13. Get the plates out as a primary condition.
14. Even when new is worn out on the water's edge.
16. A Moorish battle.
18. How to introduce an outsider.
20. Works musically.
21. That is in the sunrise.
22. How to go to make a slide.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

C	A	R	A	F	E	S	■	B	E	T	I	M	E	S
O	■	A	■	O	■	H	■	A	■	R	■	A	■	L
M	A	J	O	R	R	O	A	D	■	A	N	D	R	E
P	■	A	■	E	■	E	■	L	■	M	■	H	■	N
A	S	H	E	S	■	T	R	U	M	P	C	A	R	D
R	■	■	■	T	■	I	■	C	■	■	■	T	■	E
E	X	T	R	E	M	E	■	K	N	I	T	T	E	R
■	■	E	■	R	■	■	■	■	■	N	■	E	■	■
H	A	N	D	S	A	W	■	R	E	T	I	R	E	S
O	■	N	■	■	■	O	■	I	■	H	■	■	■	T
B	L	I	S	T	E	R	E	D	■	E	R	R	O	R
N	■	S	■	I	■	K	■	I	■	S	■	O	■	I
A	N	N	U	L	■	M	A	N	X	W	O	M	A	N
I	■	E	■	D	■	A	■	G	■	I	■	E	■	G
L	E	T	H	E	A	N	■	S	Y	M	B	O	L	S

London Amusements

MATINEES

All at 2.30 p.m. unless otherwise stated.

ALDWYCH. After October. Tu., & Wed.

ALHAMBRA. (Whi. 2525). DAILY 2.30 & 8.15.

APOLLO. The Fugitives. Wed., Sat.

COLISEUM. Lilac Time. W., Thu., Sat.

DUCHESS. Spring Tide. Wed. & Sat.

GARRICK. Storm in a Teacup. Wed., Thurs.

GLOBE. "Call It a Day." Wed. & Thurs.

PHOENIX. Professor Bernhardi. Wed., Fri.

PLAYHOUSE. Whiteoaks. Wed., Sat.

QUEEN'S. Love from a Stranger. W. & Sat.

ROYALTY. Winter Sunshine. Wed., Thurs.

ST. JAMES'. 'Pride & Prejudice.' W., Th., S.

ST. MARTIN'S. Heroes Don't Care. Tu., Fri.

SAVOY. Lady Precious Stream. M., Th., S.

SHAFTESBURY. Boy Meets Girl. W., S.

STRAND. Aren't Men Beasts! Wed., Thurs.

WHITEHALL. Anthony & Anna. W. & S.

THEATRES

ALDWYCH. Evgs., 8.30. Tu., W., 2.30. Tem. 6404.
MARY CLARE in
AFTER OCTOBER
By RODNEY ACKLAND.

ALHAMBRA. (Whi. 2525). WED. NEXT, 8.15.
Subsequently DAILY at 2.30 & 8.15
DANTE MYSTERY REVUE
8/6 to 1/6. Children Half Price (Except Gallery).

APOLLO. (Gerrard 2663.) 8.30. Wed., Sat., 2.30
THE FUGITIVES, by Walter Hackett.
MARION LORNE. GODFREY TEARLE.
PHYLLIS DARE. EDWIN STYLES.

COLISEUM. Tem. 3161. Evgs. at 8.15.
LILAC TIME.
Mats., Wed., Thurs., and Sat. at 2.30.

CROYDON, EVGS., 8.30. SAT., 5. **Repertory.**
CLOSE QUARTERS.
By Gilbert Lennox. Last week of the fourth season.

DUCHESS, Catherine Street, W.C.2. TEM. 8243.
Evgs. 8.30. Mats., Wed. & Sat. 2.30. (Smoking).
SPRING TIDE
LOUISE HAMPTON ARTHUR SINCLAIR.

GARRICK. (Tem. 4601.) 8.30. Mats., W., Th., 2.30.
STORM IN A TEACUP.
By JAMES BRIDIE & BRUNO FRANK.
OVER 200 PERFORMANCES

GLOBE. Ger. 1592. Evgs., 8.15 Sharp.
Mats., WEDS. and THURS., 2.30.
IRENE BROWNE & OWEN NARES in
"CALL IT A DAY."
By Dodie Smith.

HIPPODROME. Ger. 3272. TWICE NIGHTLY, 6.25, 9. JACK WALLER'S
"NO! NO! NANETTE"
with Clifford Mollison, Shaun Glenville, Phyllis Monkman, Barbara Vernon.
All seats bookable. (6.25, 1/6-7/6) (9 p.m., 1/6-10/6).

PHOENIX. 8.30. Wed., Fri., 2.30. Tem. 8611.
RONALD ADAM presents
ABRAHAM SOFAER in SCHNITZLER'S
PROFESSOR BERNHARDI

PLAYHOUSE. Whitehall 7774.
8.30. Ex. Mon. Wed., Thurs., Sat., at 2.30.
NANCY PRICE in
WHITEOAKS.

QUEEN'S, (Last Perfs. Aug. 8th.) Ger. 4517.
EVGS., 8.30. Mats., WEDS. & SATS., 2.30.
MARIE NEY, FRANK VOSPER in
LOVE FROM A STRANGER.

ROYALTY. Ger. 7331. All Seats Bookable.
Evgs., 8.30. Mats. Wed. & Thurs., 2.30.
NICHOLAS HANNEN, ATHENE SEYLER in
WINTER SUNSHINE.

ST. JAMES'. (Whi. 3903). No perfs. Mons.
EVGS., 8.30. WED., THUR., SAT., 2.30.
GILBERT MILLER and MAX GORDON present
"PRIDE AND PREJUDICE."

ST. MARTIN'S. Tem. 1443. 8.40, Tues., Fri., 2.30.
HEROES DON'T CARE.
CAROL GOODNER. FELIX AYLMER.
REX HARRISON. CORAL BROWN.

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SHAFTESBURY. Ger. 6666. 8.30. W., S., 2.30.
GILBERT MILLER presents
BOY MEETS GIRL.
New Comedy by BELLA and SAMUEL SPEWACK.

STRAND. (Tem. 2660.) 8.30. Wed., Thurs., 2.30.
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Farce by Vernon Sylvaine. Staged by Leslie Henson.

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A Comedy by ST. JOHN ERVINE.

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

THE COMING REARMAMENT BOOM—INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL TRADE—HOME RAILWAYS—MONTAGUE BURTON

SCOTLAND, through the "financial and trade circular" of the Royal Bank of Scotland, appears to be perplexed, if not dubious, about the new rearmament phase of our domestic recovery. We all know why internal trade has gathered momentum and the export trades have lost momentum since the last quarter of 1935. [Answer: (*i*) rearmament, and (*ii*) sanctions v. Italy plus an over-valued £.] But how long, asks the Royal Bank of Scotland, will the rearmament stimulus last? How long will it be able to pick up the slack in the export trades, which, even assuming the resumption of the 1934 upward trend, will still be substantial? What is likely to be the effect of rising prices and costs, first, on internal trade and, secondly, on foreign trade? These questions are clearly put, but only partly answered. I would like to assure the Royal Bank of Scotland that as trade recoveries usually come about by a revival in the demand for capital goods, and as our present demand for peace-time capital goods, like houses, is being caught up by an extraordinary demand for warlike capital goods, we are likely to enjoy the devil of an industrial boom. But I am glad to see that the writer of the Royal Bank's circular appreciates that this boom will benefit the entrepreneur to a greater extent than the worker. This part of his argument is worth quoting.

* * *

Between the first quarter of last year and the first quarter of 1936 wage rates had risen by 2¼ per cent., the cost of living by 3½ per cent. to 3¾ per cent. and food prices by 5½ per cent. As total employment had increased in this period the net effect on national purchasing power could only have been slightly adverse, if at all. As rearmament gathers pace there will be a redistribution of national purchasing power. Wages advance more slowly than prices, so that what labour will lose the business classes will gain. Although costs per unit will rise, profits will increase because turnover will be greater. The canny Scot concludes: "This redistribution of purchasing power to the relative advantage of the profit-drawers will probably carry the tide of recovery to higher reaches for perhaps 12 months or longer. . . ." This is the conclusion I had reached myself—a bullish one for most industrial equity shares. I do not think that the incipient bullishness of the Royal Bank of Scotland need have been restrained by so much anxiety about our export trade. Of course, we are not likely to see a revival in international trade, even if the world price level does rise, while the present phase of malicious economic nationalism lasts. But there is no need to anticipate a worsening of our export trade. If our costs rise we should have an offset in a depreciating sterling. The present over-valuation of sterling against the dollar cannot remain indefinitely and if my French information is correct—namely, that the Communists are now prepared to support M. Blum in devaluing the franc—it may not last very long.

* * *

The past week has been full of railway news and the market has been active. First came the dividend announcements and the half-yearly reports. Except in the case of the L.M. & S., which paid the full half-yearly dividends on its preference stocks, these were disappointing. Then came the announcements of the "Agreed" Rating Assessments, which were rather higher than the super-optimists had hoped, but which generally are regarded as satisfactory. Last but by no means least came the wages award. One-half of the 2½ per cent. deduction from wages is to be restored, and overtime is to be paid for at the rate of "time and a quarter" instead of "time and an eighth," Sunday and night time conditions remaining unaltered. My Statistical Assistant has been busy estimating the financial effect of all these changes. He writes: It is important to remember the order in which these decisions operate on the dividend prospects of railway "junior" stock-holders. Changes in traffics and expenditure, of course, come into this year's accounts. All the railways will presumably take credit for rating reliefs in 1936. The full effect of the increase in the wage bill will be felt only in 1937, while the increase in the cost of coal may be deferred even longer. Thus the plusses will become apparent before the minusses and the 1936 accounts of the companies will to some extent be deceptively good. It is possible to estimate fairly closely the savings in rates and the increased wage and fuel bills, but it is impossible to do more than guess what future traffics will be. Traffics this year have been good, but there is no decided trend, and it appears evident that except in the case of the L.M. & S. a very large proportion of the increase in gross receipts will be absorbed in increased expenditure. For the want of a better the assumption is made that the increase in net revenue for a full year, apart from rating, coal costs and the wage award, will be double the increase shown in the first six months. Here are the figures for the year 1936:

	G.W.R.	L.M.S.R.	L.N.E.R.	S.R.
		(In £ thousands.)		
Increase or decrease in Net Receipts..	+ 78	+ 880	+ 26	− 34
Savings in Rates ..	374	1,064	888	324
	452	1,944	914	290
Less increased wages	107	214	169	73
Net increase ..	345	1,730	745	217
1935 earnings (excl. rating relief) ..	456 on Ord.	−771 on Ord.	−453 on 2nd Pref.	1,128 on Pref. Ord.
	801	959	292	1,572
Est. 1936 earnings ..	1.9% on Ord. Stock.	1.0% on Ord. Stock.	Full on 1st Pref. .4% on 2nd Pref.	4.86% on Pref. Ord.

* * *

Great Western directors, being a law unto themselves, will doubtless pay their standard 3 per cent. on the ordinary, L.M. & S. will almost certainly pay preference dividends in full, with a sporting chance of a small dividend on the ordinary, L. & N.E. will probably pay the full first preference dividend and Southern the full preferred ordinary. But what of the more remote prospects? In 1937 rating reliefs will be greater, but the effect will be more than offset by increased wages. In addition the railways' forward contracts for the purchase of coal will be running out, and they will have to pay at least 1*s.* per ton more and eventually even more.

	G.W.R.	L.M.S.R.	L.N.E.R.	S.R.
		(In £ thousands.)		
Increase in Net Receipts	+78	+880	+26	−34
Savings in Rates ..	518	1,207	888	357
Less:				
Increased Wages..	285	570	450	195
1/- per ton Coal..	140	395	230	70
Net increase ..	171	1,212	234	58
1935 earnings ..	456 Ord.	−771 Ord.	−453 2nd Pref.	1,128 Pref. Ord.
	627	441	Dr. 219	1,413
Est. 1937 earnings..	1.5% on Ord. Stock.	.5% on Ord. Stock.	3.6% on 4% 1st Pref.	4.3% on Pref. Ord.

Toreador: I cannot get enthusiastic on these figures about any home railway stock at present prices.

* * *

I have received the following letter from a director of Montague Burton:

> I read the paragraph in your issue of August 1st with regard to Montague Burton Estates, Ltd., and would be obliged if you would correct what is no doubt an unintentional mis-statement. The formation of Montague Burton Estates does not in any way diminish the cover for the Debenture of Montague Burton, Ltd. If, to quote the instance you make, Montague Burton, Ltd., sells £750,000 of its properties to the Estates Company, it receives instead £750,000 cash. So that, instead of property it has cash as reserve for further development, and, owing to the low rates of interest at present prevailing, it has the benefit of the property at a very low rental. As the Debenture on 70 per cent. of the properties is at 4 per cent., and the Preference is at the rate of 4¾ per cent. on 20 per cent., it means that it is able to put up new properties at an average rate of 4⅜ per cent. on 90 per cent. of the cost, and yet has the ultimate benefit of the residue by holding 10 per cent. of the Ordinary shares. This form of financing is probably cheaper than that of any other multiple shop company.

My paragraph referred to the formation of Montague Burton Shop Properties, Ltd., not to Montague Burton Estates, Ltd., which is a separate company formed in 1935 to do a similar deal with the parent company. No doubt the calculation given applies to M.B. Shop Properties, but my point was that the £750,000 cash received by the parent company might not be so securely invested as it was in the properties disposed of.

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